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## KARL MARX AND HIS CRITICS. DO PROFITS GROW ON THISTLES?

"The Economic Theory of the Leisure Class,"  
by N. BUKHARIN, (Martin Lawrence, 7/6 net.)

Since the days when Marx analysed the Capitalist system of producing and distributing wealth, laid bare the secret of value, and demonstrated how surplus value is obtained, the agents of the master class have been engaged in numberless attempts to "explain" why the Capitalist is entitled to his profits. A legion of Professors of Political Economy have entered the lists against Marx, with disastrous results to themselves. Journalists and publicity writers have tried their hands where the experts have failed, with even more lamentable results.

One of the most boomed of the Marxian critics, whose general work on Economics ranks, perhaps, higher in Capitalist estimation than that of any other economist of modern times, was Böhm-Bawerk, head of the "Austrian" School of Economics. He was not only a Professor of Economics, but also Austrian Minister of Finance for some time. Thus, to his theoretical knowledge he added experience of practical affairs, and this would lead one to expect in him a most formidable opponent. Many years ago he loudly proclaimed the discovery of a "great contradiction" between the first and third volumes of "Capital," but the "discovery" caused hardly more than a flutter before it died.

His two best-known works are his "Theories of Interest," where he claims to show the failure of all the attempts to explain interest by previous economists, and his "Positive Theory of Capital," in which he sets out to state the source and reason of interest.

To reach this explanation it was necessary to state a law of value which, incidentally, would expose the hollowness of Marx's theory on the same subject. Here, however, the famous Professor was unable to do anything better than come to England and borrow the late Stanley Jevons's theory of "Final Utility," published in 1871. A few minor alterations were made, and the title changed to "Marginal Utility," and then the theory was announced as a brand-new solution of the tantalising problem of value. It is this theory of value that Bukharin criticises in the volume under review.

According to the Marginal Utility theory, value is determined, not by the ordinary utility of any article, but by the utility of the article sold by "marginal" pair of buyers and sellers that effect a sale in a given market. This is explained as follows. Sellers come into the market, each with a different price in his mind that he is prepared to accept rather than not sell at all. Buyers also come into the market, each with a different price in his mind that he will pay rather than go without the article. It is clear that if the highest price of the buyers is less than the lowest price of the sellers, no sale will take place. Also, if the highest price of the sellers is below the lowest price of the buyers, it is clear that all the articles will be sold. In practice, it is assumed that the lowest selling price will be below the highest buying price, and the actual point of contact will lie somewhere between these two figures. This point of contact forms the "marginal" price and determines the price of all the other articles of the same kind and quality in that market. In this theory the different prices demanded



are taken as representing the different degrees of utility the articles have for the different buyers. Therefore the price at which the actual sale takes place—the “marginal” price—expresses the “marginal” utility of the articles and so determines their value.

It is easy to see that here there is complete confusion between value and price, a confusion that runs throughout the whole of Böhm-Bawerk's writings; whilst two other points in the theory strike the reader at a first glance. One is that we are here given our old friend, “Supply and Demand,” in a slightly different dress, as the explanation of price, for the “marginal” pair are the same couple who effect a sale under the theory of Supply and Demand. The other point is that value, according to this theory, is entirely a question of individual estimates, or, to use the technical term, it is subjectively determined.

On the first point, it is plain as a pike-staff that this “marginal” theory has no connection with the facts. As far as the vast majority of the articles produced for sale are concerned, the prices are fixed beforehand and there is no question of bargaining at all. One does not go into a modern store and start arguing what price one shall pay for an article. The price is there already “marked in plain figures” for the customer to see. Moreover, it would be absurd to suppose that the “marginal” utility or “subjective valuation” of a given article will be alike at different places at the same time. But the prices are the same. And there still remains the criticism that was used against the older theory, namely: When Supply and Demand equal each other, what then determines the price? When the prices of the “marginal” buyer and seller are equal, what determines that price? This question is not even mentioned, let alone an answer attempted, by the Austrian School.

On the second point, that value is a “subjective” question, it is evident that as each individual's “subjective” estimate will be different from the others, we have here no actual basis of general value at all. Such an “explanation” is a good illustration of the mental bankruptcy of the apologists of the Capitalist class. But it is on the question of interest that this bankruptcy is most clearly seen, and for good reasons.

Capitalists' profits form the danger zone

of orthodox economics. It is useless to deny, however “subjectively,” that profits exist. So they must be “explained.” But how? Every apologist answers differently, until Böhm-Bawerk feels impelled to write a large volume to show that they all are wrong. Then what is his explanation? Truly wonderful.

The Capitalist has resources and can buy raw materials, machinery and other plant necessary for the production of articles for sale at some future time. The worker has only his labour-power to sell, and as he is without resources he cannot wait till that “future time” when the articles will be sold. Moreover, in common with other people, the worker places a greater value upon a present satisfaction or utility than on a future one. The difference between the present and the future valuations is the source of the Capitalist's interest, and the justification for that interest is found in the time the Capitalist waits before receiving it. An illustration may make this point clear. For the sake of simplicity we will only deal with the worker's part in production, leaving on one side the question of raw material, plant, etc.

Let us assume that it takes a month from the beginning of the manufacture to the selling of a given article, and that the article sells for 20s. As the worker cannot wait for a month, he would consider the present value of a smaller sum—say 15s.—as equal to the future value (a month hence) of 20s. So the Capitalist, who is a thought-reader, advances the worker 15s. to-day for work that will produce 20s. a month after. There is, of course, no robbery, as the worker is quite ready—nay anxious—to take the 15s. to-day rather than wait a month for 20s. If the worker could wait the month, he would receive the 20s., and interest and profit would vanish!

Why does he not wait? Because he has no resources, says Böhm-Bawerk. Exactly. But why has he no resources? Here Böhm-Bawerk becomes suddenly shy and offers no explanation. The answer is simple. It is because he is forcibly prevented from obtaining any resources by the power in the hands of the Capitalist class.

It is not a question of the worker's “subjective” valuation of either present or future utilities at all. It is the fact that the only alternative he has to accepting the Capitalist's terms is starvation. As the

worker is forcibly restrained from any access to raw materials or machinery and tools to work upon that material, he is unable to accumulate any resources and must therefore sell his services day by day. It is the difference between the value the worker produces and that value that he receives, that forms the source of surplus value. Interest and Profit are parts of this surplus value, and hence are the result of the robbery of the worker by the Capitalist.

These and several other questions, such as the “abstinence” of the Capitalist, and whether he “advances” the wages of the worker, are dealt with very fully by Bukharin in this volume. The book, however, is one for the student rather than for popular reading. German writers, as is well known, are very fond of cumbersome words and long and involved sentences. Böhm-Bawerk's writings follow the national model, and Bukharin, apparently, enjoys using the same sort of phraseology, with the result that the book presents a somewhat fearsome appearance to the lay reader. As a technical criticism of the Austrian School, the book can be fully recommended to all who refuse to be frightened by the terminology used.

J. FITZGERALD.

## TWO LECTURES.

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## SEX RELATIONS IN RUSSIA. ARE THEY REVOLUTIONARY?

A Bolshevik writer on literature and sex, well known in America, Mr. V. F. Calverton, waxes very enthusiastic on “Red Love in Soviet Russia,” in his magazine, *The Modern Quarterly* (Nov., 1927), an American journal cultivated by “Red in intellectuals.”

The “Red” writer has just returned from Soviet Russia, and admires the “realistic candour” with which Russia is meeting the sex problem.

He quotes at the outset the usual rubbish of Capitalist distortion, such as the following from the “Yellow” morning paper, the *New York American*, of June 12th, 1927, on “Marriage in Russia”:

A Provincial Control Commission of the Communist Party in examining a member as to his conduct and life, something that is often done, asked him about his morals and sex relations. He replied that he was happily married, had a beautiful wife, loved her, and was faithful to her. The Commission expelled him from the Party on the ground of “holding to small bourgeois principles.”

This type of lie has almost died out here, but in America it still survives. On the other hand, the view is widespread that sex relations in Russia are changing in a Socialist direction, but the evidence advanced does not support that view.

The writer of the article claims to uphold the materialist view of history—but drops it when he deals with sex relations. What material environment is there in Russia upon which new sex relations can flourish? Small private property in the villages and a mixture of State-controlled and privately-owned businesses and industries in the towns! And withal a struggle to maintain pre-war standards of production and to find work for all the able-bodied.

Mr. Calverton deals with some of the changes in woman's position in Russia, and argues that “woman has been emancipated from her subordination to man, which she still suffers in the ‘civilised’ Western world.”

Marriage in Russia is now a civil function, but the ecclesiastical aspects of it are destroyed. Thus argues Mr. Calverton, but he omits to mention that besides the civil contract, marriage may be celebrated in all the churches in Russia where religion is “reformed,” but still strong.

We are next told that when a woman



marries in Russia "she is still a free woman." This high-sounding phrase, when explained by him, means the domestic code "does not establish community of property between the married persons," and that change of residence of one of the parties does not oblige the other to follow. Surnames of children may be that of husband or wife, as the couple may decide. The man cannot shirk responsibility for the children, and in case of divorce, we are told, a third of the man's salary is requisite for the support of each child.

These changes are not revolutionary. "Property rights" of woman have become commonplace in capitalist countries with the entry of woman into business, etc.

Changes as to names and separate residences may be written into statute law, but, like many of the laws which Russia passed in its early Bolshevik days, they must remain dead letters if they conflict with economic conditions. The housing question in Russia is very acute, and to point to laws which allow separate residences for married people only brings up the question, when will even the married workers living *together* be able to get adequate accommodation in a country where rich and poor still have a real meaning and a real existence?

He quotes Madame Kollantay to the effect that what is revolutionary in Russia's sex relations is "the creation of a collective responsibility," "feelings of comradeship," etc., but no facts are adduced to show its real existence, any more so than in any capitalist State. Engels's book, "The Origin of the Family," is quoted, but no deductions are drawn from the important point made by Engels, that once capitalism is overthrown, the new race growing up under new conditions will fashion their opinions and practice without any regard to what we to-day consider should be their course.

The fact that statute law cannot escape from the dominant influence of material conditions is admitted in the Russian Code quoted in the article:—

Only time and experience will show how many of the provisions of this code belong to the transitional category, features which are destined to vanish with the more perfect establishment of the Socialist order. In certain clauses, however, there is clearly to be discerned a conscious recognition of conditions and habits of life surviving from the old order. Such survivals are inevitable at this time when neither the economic nor the psychological transformation is

complete. There are provisions respecting property and income which will inevitably be subject to obsolescence or amendment. The law of guardianship, essentially revolutionary as it is, is yet no more than a first tentative approach to the realisation of collective responsibility for the care of the young. The laws of marriage and divorce still bear traces of the passing order, frank and sensible acknowledgment of the existence of certain economic and psychological conditions only to be overcome when the complete change is accomplished.

All children in Russia are legal. Compared with Czarist Russia, this is an advance, where children were counted illegal where a church marriage had not been performed. And even in this country the interests of property are gradually legalising children born out of wedlock.

A great deal is made of the fact that in Russia divorce can be obtained upon mutual consent on the grounds of incompatibility. Again, if we compare this with Czarist days, it is an advance, as under Nicholas adultery was necessary to obtain divorce. But modern capitalist States are modifying divorce law, and in Puritan America divorces in many States are granted on the slightest pretext.

In Russia Birth Control literature is plentiful. So it is here and generally throughout Europe. With the difference that most people here can read it, but Russia still suffers a large amount of illiteracy. From the Rev. Mr. Malthus (Christian apologist for a ruthless war on the workers) down to Charles Bradlaugh (atheist defender of capital) and on to reformer Marie Stopes, we have had plenty of Birth Control propaganda, and mostly by individualists—clearly showing that it has little revolutionary interest.

Abortion in Russia is legal, but the high birth rate and the low economic development in Russia doubtless plays a large part in welcoming anything to reduce births.

Between 1922 and 1924 more than 55,000 legal abortions were performed in Russian State hospitals. The backward mental development of Russia's peasantry—her most fruitful populace—necessitated scientifically performing what was generally done in a dangerous way by those who feared every new mouth to feed. The widespread practice of abortion in Russia still shows that birth control literature may be cheap, but the practice of birth control methods among a backward people still very slow.

These reforms may all be well carried out in every capitalist country without in any way weakening the fabric of capitalism. And where they are carried out in some degree as in U.S.A., the individualist and reactionary views of those who are in favour of them is notorious.

Prostitution in Soviet Russia is still strong as it must be in every country where the workers are poor and private property owners are prosperous. All the freedom of marriage laws on paper cannot override the effects of economic life.

The battle with the brothel keepers in Soviet Russia is dealt with by the official journal, "Izvestia" (November 11th, 1926), quoted by Mr. Calverton.

In 30 States in one year 715 houses of prostitution were opened, chiefly in Moscow, Leningrad, Samara, and Stalingrad. Unemployment of single women was found to be one of the greatest dangers. The "Izvestia" (November 11th, 1926) states that over 32 per cent. of the prostitutes are occupation house workers.

The Soviets decreed that single women should be laid off last in the event of unemployment. Houses for the Reformation of Prostitutes were opened, and the Commissar of Public Health says that prostitution is on the decline. No figures are quoted to show this, but in any case the causes are still there and the attempts at reforming are little in advance of the Salvation Army.

Summing up the general sex relations, it is obvious that there is nothing beyond the process of reform from the barbaric condition of Czarist laws to laws more suitable to capitalist development.

International Socialism, on the other hand, will not deal with effects of capitalist conditions, but lay the economic foundations upon which new sex relations will flourish, freed entirely from the trammels of property and economic insecurity. A. KOHN.

#### ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

F. R. RIMINGTON (Leicester).—Your further reply to article by Jacob will be dealt with in next issue.

F. S. HARVEY (Wandsworth).—Your letter re "The Slave of the Farm" does not deal with the conditions in Canada, and is therefore hardly a criticism of the pamphlet. We note your reference to the hard conditions under which the "Australian serf" works for the farmer there, which is, however, in its main features, inevitable under private and class ownership.

#### THE PSYCHOLOGY OF CAPITAL.

Dr. F. Aveling, M.C., Ph.D., D.Sc., is a Reader in Psychology of London University, King's College. In the course of an article in the "Daily Chronicle" of December 6th he discusses the question, "How can we make the most of Life?"

Quite correctly he points out the lack of scientific education in the art of living—the fact that "each one of us begins where his father began instead of where he left off"—and that as a consequence we are the embodiment of inconstancy, "square pegs in round holes and round pegs in square."

As instances of the mal-adjustment prevalent in modern society he remarks that "no one has troubled till recently to find out what mental equipment is required to fit a boy or girl, say, leaving school, for the life-work he is taking up, or to see that he is found an employment in keeping with his powers."

He laments the fact that "while science has been busy conquering time, annihilating space, and harnessing the forces of external nature to our service . . . it has left the most vital of all human problems to the speculations of the moralists."

Nevertheless he informs us that "it has been found possible by motion and fatigue study to shorten the hours of work in many employments with great saving in output of human energy and great increase in actual production."

This means "the advantage of the employer and the employees alike, a better understanding between them, less friction and discontent in industry, a greater enjoyment of life." Thus does our psychologist answer his question.

Let us see where he stands. Production to-day is carried on for profit. When no profit is made industry comes to a standstill. Increased production usually means increased profit. Economy in the output of human energy means that fewer workers are needed in order to produce a given amount of wealth, in other words, increasing unemployment.

The larger capitalist concerns with their command of the most up-to-date machinery, their scientific staffs (including the psychologists), get more out of their workers in a given time and can thus undersell their competitors. In order to remain in business at all the smaller concerns must wring more than the normal amount of energy from



their particular groups of slaves, by overtime. The efficiency of some of the workers thus leads to the worsening of conditions for the rest. Particular firms may rid themselves of the more obvious expressions of friction and discontent, by these means, but so far as society at large is concerned, these accompaniments of capitalism are on the increase.

There does not appear, therefore, to be any considerable ground for the optimism of the "Chronicler," while a little further examination will show how entirely superficial his view of life is.

The discontent of the miner is not due to the fact that he is not a railwayman or a doctor or some other form of wage-slave. Whatever form of employment the individual may prove most efficient in, he or she has to be exploited. The wage-workers have to enable their employers to annexe a surplus from their efforts. They have to produce more than their keep. That is the fundamental condition of their employment and the rock bottom cause of discontent. Other sources of trouble are incidental and supplementary. They may to a large extent be minimised by the improved organisation of capitalism without abolishing or diminishing to the slightest degree the antagonism of interests between the classes.

Does the Doctor of Philosophy suggest that the mal-adjusted capitalist might become a wage-slave? Does he propose that a bank director suffering, let us imagine, from an Oedipus complex should find surcease from his cares in the packing department of a jam factory? "Put me among the girls" may be a cure for some mental complaints, but it is doubtful if any afflicted bourgeois is likely to take up work as his calling in life in order to get there.

Again, it is readily conceivable that an investor who has burnt his fingers over, say, oil, might arrive at the conclusion that his neglectful parents were to blame in not giving him sounder advice when young. Had more attention been paid to his mental equipment he might have made a fortune in rubber shares.

That, of course, is mere speculation, but one thing is certain. He would never think of blaming his old man for leaving him the wherewithal to invest. All the King's College psychologists in the world would not convince him that shareholding was an undesirable career in his particular case.

However mal-adjusted he might be in other respects he would cling most tenaciously to that indispensable connection with his social environment.

Dr. Aveling, of course, does not deal with these facts. He is studious of the interests of the class which pays him, and so he presents the psychological problem as an abstract question affecting all equally and in the same direction irrespective of their class position.

He betrays no inkling of a suspicion that it is the needs of his employers which give his pretended science its present-day importance.

When the capitalist class was young and still engaged in the struggle to overthrow their feudal oppressors the physical sciences met their requirements. The development of the processes of production in order to meet the growing demands of the world market, coupled with the improvement in weapons of warfare, were their chief immediate needs.

Now, having definitely established themselves as the rulers in society, they must turn their attention to the task of preserving their system and increasing the benefits which they derive from it. In this pursuit they find a constant menace in the unrest of their slaves. They can employ force when dealing with particular sections, but in order to control the working class as a whole they must use cunning. They must employ knowledge of the minds of those whom they would control.

Hence psychology comes to the rescue of priest and politician, journalist and factory manager. Dr. Aveling refers to the need for "regulating the emotions." How well the prostituted intelligentsia understand that art was exemplified in the recent war. Animal passions were unleashed and fed in order that markets might be kept, trade routes protected and raw materials supplies acquired.

Actions, which would have hung or imprisoned those responsible if done in the factory, became magnified into feats of valour when performed on the battlefield. To smash a bullying foreman's nose was a crime. To bayonet a German fellow-slave (up till then unheard of) was a duty.

Oh! Psychology! What wonders are committed with thine aid! Vegetarians and beefeaters, Atheists and Christians, discovered an instinctive harmony with one

another when the interests of capital were threatened.

Self-knowledge and self-control are desirable enough, no doubt, to any individual in his endeavour to adapt himself to the conditions of his existence; but to be of any value they must be subordinate to an understanding of the environment itself.

It is by their interaction with the forces of nature that men have developed their powers as a race, and it is by contact with his fellows in the daily struggle with economic forces that the individual is moulded. At present that struggle takes the form of a class antagonism. The knowledge necessary to-day is, therefore, a class knowledge. It is a class-consciousness, or if you will, a class-psychology, which results from the very conditions of social existence so long as the means of life are owned by a class.

No metaphysical trick can get over that fact or rid us of the necessity for struggling for the emancipation of our class. That is the only road to social harmony.

E. B.

#### PAMPHLETS FOR SALE.

We have had a big demand for the pamphlets published by the Socialist Party of Canada and advertised for sale in the October "S.S." :-

"Wage-Labour and Capital" (Marx), 60 pages, 4d.

"Communist Manifesto" (Marx and Engels), 59 pages, 4d.

"Causes of Belief in God" (Lafargue), 48 pages, 6d.

"Socialism—Utopian and Scientific" (Engels), 95 pages, 6d.

"Value, Price and Profit" (Marx), 78 pages, 6d.

Note.—Postage extra: ½d. per copy.

#### FULHAM, AWAKE!

Sympathisers of the party who are willing to join a local branch are invited to communicate with

The General Secretary,

17, Mount Pleasant,

W.C.I.

All meetings of the Socialist Party of Great Britain, including branch and executive meetings, are open to the public. We have no "secret diplomacy."

#### THE WORKERS AND THE DOGS.

Greyhound racing! A baby sport, which has not yet seen its first birthday, yet the turnstiles have recorded 4,500,000 spectators. Why? It is because of its comparative cheapness and ease of access, that it attracts the working class.

At first sight, one would imagine that, beyond making a contribution to the Exchequer in the form of Entertainment and Betting Taxes, the sport had little to do with politics or class interest. But, according to the *Morning Post* (26/10/27), greyhound racing and its effects on the working class formed the subject of a discussion the previous evening at a dinner of the Thirty Club at Claridge's Hotel.

A viewpoint was put by a Mr. Philip Emmanuel, who deprecated greyhound racing because, he said, it tempted the poor man to lose more than he could afford, to the detriment of his family. How eager for the welfare of the working class are these people who dine at first-class hotels. Or did the gentleman really mean that money spent on racing, instead of food and clothing, would lessen the efficiency of the wage-slave to produce profits for the master class?

Brigadier-General A. C. Critchley contributed the following to the discussion:—

"If you can give the working man something wholesome to talk and think about, it stops a lot of Communistic nonsense, which occurs simply because there is nothing else to do. Greyhound racing, properly handled, is one of the greatest counter-irritants to Socialistic revolution we have yet seen."

This soothing effect of sport and other pastimes has often been pointed out by us, but it is so uncommon for a Capitalist representative to admit this fact frankly. Of course, General Critchley only did so from self-interest; he is a director of the Greyhound Racing Association. The statement explains the apparent generosity of Capitalists who donate sums of money and trophies to sports clubs, and resist with all their might an attempt by their employees to secure a slight increase in wages.

H. M.

#### NEW PUBLICATIONS FUND.

Contributions to this fund are earnestly invited to assist us with the expense of publishing more literature.



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All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 17, Mount Pleasant, London, W.C.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

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**The Socialist Standard,**

JAN.,



1928

**WHERE BOLSHEVISM FAILS.****TEN YEARS THAT PROVE OUR CASE.**

It may appear paradoxical to write of the failure of a movement which has controlled the political machinery in the largest country in Europe for a decade. Success or failure, however, must be measured in relation to the avowed object of the movement. In England we have had, for generations, a movement (known as the Co-operative) which claimed to supersede capitalism. In fact, it has developed into a department of capitalist society. Similarly the Soviet Government employs wage slaves (like any other State), produces commodities for sale at a profit and arranges concessions with other capitalist concerns, private or national; at one time feared and execrated by capitalist politicians it is now treated on level terms at World Councils of the Powers. Why?

The Bolshevik coup of November, 1917, was no miracle. It was in line with the general history of Russian conditions for a century past. The development of industry, and, consequently, capitalist society had been held in check both by external and internal forces for generations. Britain and France had throttled expansion in the Baltic and the Black Sea, while the new capitalist power, Japan, put the finishing touch on the process in the East.

Capitalist industrialism must have markets, but the population of Russia consisted (and still consists) of millions of peasants producing mainly to satisfy their own requirements. Such surplus as they raise is under pressure from the tax-gatherer. According to Trotsky, "More than two-thirds of the consumption of the scattered peasant holdings is excluded from the market, and only the lesser third has any influence on the economy of the country." — "Towards Socialism or Capitalism" (page 43).

Depending upon such immature productive resources the Tsarist bureaucracy plunged into the war with Germany (a highly industrialised nation) with the inevitable result that three years later its armies melted away, underfed, ragged, ill-armed and ill-equipped, to listen to the agitators. Revolt and the collapse of the governmental edifice followed. Party after party attempted to stem the rising tide. The Bolsheviks alone had the organisation, discipline and insight which enabled them to ride the storm.

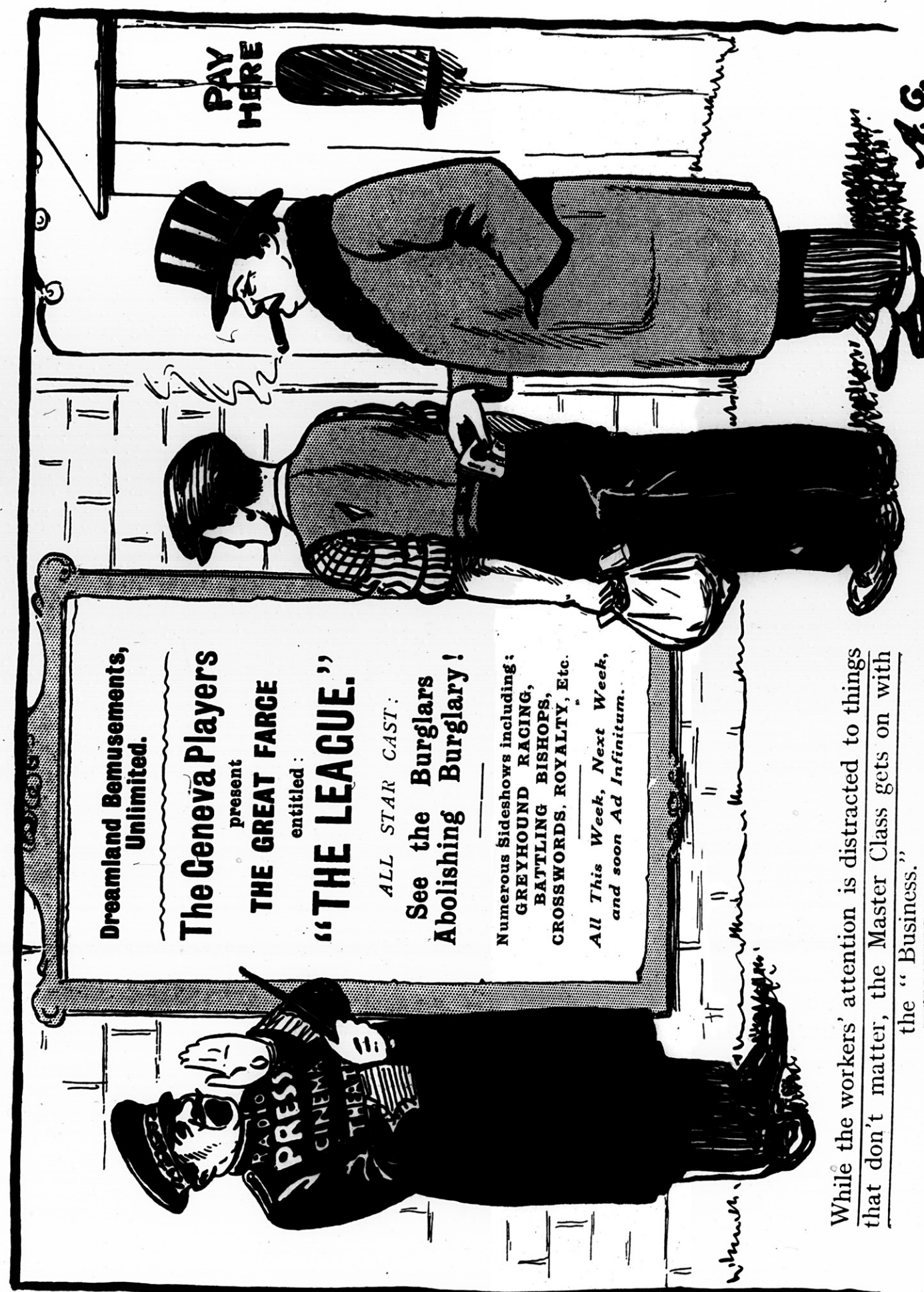
Overthrowing Kerensky and his facing-both-ways supporters they endeavoured to obtain the support of the workers along parliamentary lines. Failing in this they proceeded to disperse the assembly by force and have "dictated" by the same means ever since.

Their leaders, Lenin, Trotsky and the rest had studied Marx and professed Socialism as their ultimate object. This, however, does not distinguish them from opportunist parties in other countries.

This programme upon which they gained the support of the army was certainly not Socialism; nor could any army establish Socialism, except under the direction and control of a Socialist working class, and this in turn could not have been found in Russia in 1917.

The army, drawn mainly from the peasantry, wanted to get back to their villages. Along with the workers in the towns they wanted food, and an end to the war in which they had no interest. The Bolsheviks promised them these things.

Although the new régime excluded all other parties from control, it dished them by stealing their programmes. Thus it legalised the Social Revolutionary Party's ideal, peasant proprietorship, and eventually by means of the New Economic Policy

**THE SHADOW SHOW.**

While the workers' attention is distracted to things that don't matter, the Master Class gets on with the "Business."



opened up the avenues of development for the petty bourgeois elements in towns hitherto championed by the Mensheviks. It nationalised the large industries by the simple process of confiscation and then paid the capitalists to restart them (vide Trotsky's book quoted above, page 38). The unreadiness of the workers themselves to assume ownership and control provided the dictators with both the opportunity and the excuse for the policy of compromise, economic and political, which they have since followed.

In foreign affairs, intrigue has been the weapon with which they have endeavoured to make terms with other capitalist powers.

Ostensibly they set out to initiate a world-revolution, ignoring the enormous amount of propagandist spade-work that still remains to be done before any such event is likely. Again the unreadiness of the workers of the world furnished them with the opportunity and excuse for entering into negotiations with the leaders of the "Second International," whom they professed to be out to smash. Their "sympathisers" throughout the world, who suddenly conceived a respect for the magic of the name "Communist," similarly commenced by attacking the Right Wing leaders both of Labour Parties and Trade Unions, and wound up by calling upon the workers to support these self-same leaders at the polling-booth. Where Marxian phraseology has appeared to meet their requirements they have used it only to disregard its real meaning whenever that has proved inconvenient.

The high-sounding phrases with which the movement proclaimed its alleged mission to the world have long since degenerated into empty verbiage, repeated parrot-like by the hot-headed "enthusiasts" who encumber the pathway of the scientific revolutionary party.

In Russia the proletariat (i.e., the wage-earning, working-class) is in a minority. Hence any movement on their part is a "minority movement." In Britain the same class is in an overwhelming majority. It only needs to organise consciously and politically to have its way. Yet we have in this country a "minority movement"! What interests does it represent?

In Russia dictatorship is the traditional mode of government. It is made possible by the unorganised conditions of the

majority of the population whose outlook is local rather than national; where politics are concerned the peasants "leave it to others." In Britain the wage slaves have struggled for and gained legal and political rights which serve as a stepping stone to the control of society along democratic lines.

The Bolshevik movement has failed to teach the workers of Western Europe and America anything new concerning their position and has assisted but little to help forward their education in the task ahead of them. It has fogged the issue by introducing controversy over points long ago settled so far as this country is concerned. Let the workers study the history of their class and they will discover that the methods advocated by so-called Communists were tried and scotched by the ruling class over a hundred years ago.

When the army was quartered among the workers at the time of the French Revolution and the workers themselves were seething with discontent brought about by the advent of the machine industry then, if ever, was the time for seducing the troops from their allegiance. Destitute of political rights, it appeared in those days the only logical policy. Capitalist statesmen, such as Pitt, however, foresaw the danger to their class and segregated the army in barracks. To-day there is only one road to political power and economic emancipation. That is the slow but sure road followed by the Socialist Party.

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## SOCIALISM AND ANTI-PARLIAMENTARISM.

### REPORT OF LECTURE.

Held at Friars Hall, Blackfriars, 20/11/27.

Comrade Fitzgerald commenced his lecture by pointing out the erroneous definitions of Socialism which were being spread about by Capitalist agents in order to breed confusion in the minds of the Working Class. For that reason, he went on to say, it was especially necessary to define Socialism. Two false definitions were (1) that Socialism meant a system of sharing-out; (2) that Socialism was a system of rationing. The word "Socialism" was taken from the word "Society." The Economic League denied there was any system in society; they claimed that there had always been one method of "getting things done" and that was the present one, which had always existed. They allowed only for changes in the details of the management of society. The Socialist, however, took the evidence in front of him and held that changes in the system had taken place. When the Socialist laid down that he was out for Socialism, he wanted a system of society where those things necessary for the maintenance of life itself would be owned by society as a whole. Socialism meant the social ownership of the things necessary to maintain life—land, railways, machinery, plant, etc. The products would be individually owned and consumed. That definition should be kept clearly in mind. The idea that we would all use the same toothbrush was sheer nonsense. Another bogey put forward was that Socialism would restrict individuality. Individuality was already restricted when it entered Society.

In capitalist society we had the contradiction of over-production with the majority of the people lacking the necessities of life. To-day the present system was known as capitalism, and the troublesome task with which it was faced was the finding of markets for its products. This was due to the fact that the things made were produced for SALE and not to satisfy the needs of society. The things necessary to maintain life were privately owned by a small section in society, a section which took no part in production. The working class changed the raw material into the finished articles. The working class received money—a medium of exchange—for

their services, but they could only purchase a small portion of the things produced with that money. The rest of the products which the working class could not buy because their purchasing power was so limited, had to be exported into other countries after the capitalist class had consumed as much as it could. Even the capitalist consumption was limited and so the capitalists were still faced with the problem of over-production. The basic factor of wars was the struggle of the capitalists to find markets and routes for their products. There was no economic solution and the capitalists could only meet the difficulty for the time being by maintaining, as they are doing to-day, but in still greater proportions, those members of the working class who were unemployed. It was a fault in the working of the system. The only solution was to harmonise production and ownership by society taking control of the means of production and the instruments for the converting of the raw material into the articles we require, and owning socially, produce socially—i.e., for the needs of Society and not for the profits of a class. The question was how was this to be done—there was only one manner of doing it and that was by the members of society desiring it should be so—it was not going to happen behind one's back as some people fondly imagined. The human factor was necessary to change the present conditions. The only class interested in that change was the working class—it was to their interest that the capitalist system should be wiped out. How, then, to bring about Socialism? In the ultimate—it was power. The workers had, therefore, to examine the situation and decide how they could get that necessary power into their hands. Political power was the essential for bringing about the change. There was a great deal of confusion about the meaning of political power, and a great deal of superstition. Some thought the vote was merely a fable to amuse the working class. Others that since politics were corrupted, the workers should not dabble in them, but should devote themselves to the pure, clean, atmosphere of economic action. That action did not look so pure now—with its Black Friday of the Triple Alliance and its blacker Wednesday of the so-called General Strike. These notions, whether springing from personal experience or manufactured by people whose interest it was to spread confusion, were due to a misunderstanding of what politics



meant. The working class had not grasped the historical side of the matter. They join a political party and they see underhand trickery going on that they sicken of the whole business because they do not understand politics. The ordinary dictionary told you that the word "Politics" was the name given to the "Science of the State"—that was not sufficient. Politics had their basis in the organisation of society itself and in the early days when arrangements had to be made for common purposes, those restrictions, arrangements, etc., were the politics of that time.

*The Development of Politics.*—In the regulations of the tribal communities we have the first stages of the development of the political machine. The technical term for a meeting of the tribes was "the Phratry." Tribes would be organised according to their conditions of obtaining a living. Some would live by plunder and others by agriculture. Beyond the Tweed, we find the terms "Highlander" and "Lowlander" still surviving. They had their origin in the two methods of organisation, i.e., The Highlanders for plunder, and the Lowlanders for agriculture. We have remnants of this type of tribal organisation in India on the North-West Frontier.

In this country we can go back to the days of the Anglo-Saxon invasion when the Anglo-Saxon tribes divided the land between them, probably, into the different "shires" that exist to this day. A unit of division was very often one hundred soldiers, one of these divisions in use to-day is "The Chiltern Hundreds." It was interesting to remark that the only way for an M.P. to resign from Parliament to-day was by applying for the stewardship of the Chiltern Hundreds which are non-existent, otherwise he was technically unable to resign.

The first form of National Council was the Witenagemote composed of representatives of the different shires. In the 13th Century Simon de Montfort summonsed together the first "Parliament" for the consideration of ways and means of carrying on wars. It was then too that the towns were first represented. In King John's time we found the Barons holding a council and refusing to suffer the despotic John to tax as he pleased, and at Runnymede the Magna Charter was signed, which provided among other things that no man should be sent abroad without his consent.

*The Position with Regard to Kings.*—Foreign writers were apt to point to the instance of the deposition and beheading of Charles the First as unique in English History, but this king had a predecessor in King Richard II, who was deposed during the year 1399, and superseded by Henry IV, who was crowned by a "general election" of the barons. So the Right of Kings was not only challenged, but brought to its logical conclusion. The 16th century marked intense development in politics. The merchant class was rising; the New World had been discovered; enormous markets were opened for produce and commerce and enormous areas were found for plunder. Trouble began to brew over the demands of King Charles I that finally led to a rupture between the King and Parliament. It is interesting to note here that Charles had formed stores of ammunition near the Border in preparation for a war with Scotland. When the clash between the King and Parliament came, the Parliament sent its officials to seize those stores, which was promptly done. Colonel Hutchinson in his "Memoirs," has reported an amusing incident where the authority of Parliament set the authority of the King at naught, and the official sent to take the supplies for the King was denied by the officer in charge who wanted Parliament's authority first. The King was beheaded.

The rigid rule of the Puritans led to a temporary reaction, and then the Restoration of Charles II. But the Stuarts had learnt little and James II tried to restore the "Divine Right of Kings." This led to the Rebellion of 1688, and the placing of William of Orange—as William III—on the Throne. But William was only made King on condition that he accepted the Constitution that kept the real power in the hands of Parliament, and he signed a declaration to that effect. This illustrated the power of Parliament and the importance of political power.

In 1832 the Reform Bill was passed, which completed the control of power by the capitalist class. Political machinery, is, therefore, the method of managing the affairs of any given society. It is not a bauble—it is a factor grown out of the development of society itself.

To-day, the workers perform all the useful functions in society. Occasionally a capitalist may amuse himself by going into the office to dabble in business, but as a class, the capitalists preferred to spend their

time at the gambling tables of Monte Carlo or yachting in the Mediterranean, etc. Some people said that it was the capitalist class who provided the brains. What, then, happened when a capitalist died? Surely in such a case the business must die with him—but what did we find?—more often than not the business went on better than during his life, at all events it did not immediately die. The truth was that brains were bought, and the brains were supplied by the working class. Since the capitalist performed no useful function, the logical deduction was that those who did all the work should enjoy the results. Why didn't they? It was not a question of numbers—the workers were in the majority. Why didn't they take control of the means of production for themselves? Simply because if they had attempted to do so they would have had to meet the forces of the Nation—the army, the aircraft, etc. The army, however, is composed of working men, and even the officers, bar the fashionable regiments like the Guards, are working men—they sell their "professional services" for their livelihood. How, then, did the capitalist control the Army? It was a question of supplies. First, the law sanctioning the Army, etc., is passed by Parliament. Then the supplies necessary to maintain and increase these Forces are voted in the Annual Budget. Lastly, the instructions and general orders are sanctioned by Parliament before they can be put into operation. The control of the Fighting Forces is therefore in the hands of those controlling the political machinery.

Another point, not so well known, is that a Standing Army—for more than a year—is illegal in this country. How then does this Army continue in existence? By the following method. Every year a Bill called the Renewal of Expiring Acts Bill is passed in the House of Commons. One of the items in that Bill is the renewal of the Army. So that even to continue the Army the control of Parliament is necessary. Since 1867, when the Ten Pound Franchise Bill was passed, the workers have had the majority of votes. The workers, therefore, have ample means to get control of that machine politically. The anarchist says Parliament is no good.

*The Anarchists.*—There are two sets of Anarchist Groups, one believes that an individual should be entirely free and that action should be confined to economic lines—i.e., striking, etc. That a General Strike

would wipe out capitalism. They ignore the fact that the first people to suffer are the working class, who have the smallest supplies. A General Strike, therefore, means General Starvation.

Moreover they are quite unable to show how unarmed workers could face the fighting forces, particularly with the latter's powerful modern weapons of destruction.

The other set believes that syndicates should be organised by the workers in the industries for the purpose of taking over these industries and that each section should be confined to its own trade, i.e., the bakers—the bakery, the miners—the mines, etc. This was known as Syndicalism. It was absurd to isolate the workers in that manner—to put the miners in charge of the mines, the sewer men in charge of the sewers, and the lunatics, presumably, in charge of the asylums. (Laughter.) Production was social, the miner depended on the baker for his bread, and the baker depended on the miner for his coal, etc.

About 1905 a scheme was formulated in Chicago that had for its method the "taking and holding" of the means of production without a political party. The body then formed was called the Industrial Workers of the World. When asked how they could hold the means of production the answer usually given was "by locking out the capitalist." As the capitalist is hardly ever in the factory this did not seem a very hopeful procedure. When asked what power the workers could bring against the armed forces they had no answer, though later on they developed the notion of physical force—a piece of sheer lunacy while the capitalist control political power. The Anti-Parliamentarists, such as Guy Aldred, who ranted about the uselessness of the political machine, were unable to find a substitute. The Socialist Society, in its first stages, may have to maintain a standing army, and it will be the workers then who will determine that question. Having this control, through the political machine, the workers will be able to obtain and distribute what they require.

### NEW PAMPHLET.

We are proposing to publish a new pamphlet, but we cannot do so until we have the money. If we print 20,000 copies the cost will be in the neighbourhood of £100. We ask, therefore, for donations. As soon as we get sufficient to justify giving the order to our printer we shall be pleased to proceed.



## AN INDIVIDUALIST'S DEFENCE OF CAPITAL.

The *Daily Mirror* (28/10/27) introduces an article by Sir Ernest Benn with the following headlines:—

Why Capitalism is "Ruthless."  
Economic law as old as Adam—not a system but a great natural force.

There are a few socialists who still imagine that capitalism is a system invented by the rich to exploit the poor.

No man can truthfully call himself a Socialist who says, or thinks, that the Capitalist system was invented. Whatever he may call himself, or whatever the *Daily Mirror* may call him, however, it is plain from a perusal of Sir Ernest Benn's article that the charge against Capitalism of exploitation is unanswerable.

Had it been possible to show that the working class is not exploited by the capitalist class, Sir Ernest would have done so, instead of stringing together a number of statements that can only be described as what he and other Capitalists wish or would like to think. He says:—

The future of capitalism will be exactly like its past. Capitalism is not something which alters or varies or changes.

A great deal of confused thinking is caused by people who imagine that capitalism is something to do with the industrial revolution; something which can be altered by Act of Parliament; or something which we can put off or put on or adopt or reject at our pleasure.

For the Capitalist, of course, Capitalism is perfect. The Capitalist hates to hear his system attacked. It suits him admirably. He hates to think of the possibility of change. The snag in evolution, for him, is that he cannot apply it to the universe at large, and rule it out where his material interests are concerned. His particular method of exploitation, wage slavery, is quite recent in its general application, when compared with the system of exploitation that preceded it. Feudalism and chattel slavery, other forms of exploitation, though more enduring than Capitalism has shown itself up to the present, were short periods compared with the early Communism that preceded it.

To speak to a Capitalist of the industrial revolution is like reminding a decrepit octogenarian of his youth. That period of Capitalist history when the means of wealth production changed from tools operated by muscular energy, plus wind and water, to machines driven by steam, is generally

spoken of as the industrial revolution. That period was the youth of Capitalism. Its childhood was passed side by side with Feudalism in the Middle Ages. The change—termed progress by the Capitalist—that has taken place since the industrial revolution even, is so great, so important, that it forms part of every child's education. Sir Ernest must eradicate this teaching from the minds of the workers before he can frighten them away from Socialism by flatly asserting that Capitalism is something which does not change.

"A great deal of confused thinking is caused by people who imagine that Capitalism is something to do with the industrial revolution," says Sir Ernest; but is it merely confused thinking on his part to say that Capitalism is the same now as then, or is it merely lying?

Capitalism is the unhappy word invented, I think, by the Socialists to express the way we live and the economic forces that govern our lives.

The two predominant features of Capitalism are work and saving, and we cannot live without both.

In this last sentence Sir Ernest acknowledges the debt owed by the capitalist class to the working class; the latter being the only class that works and the only class that denies itself the satisfaction of its desires, with the result that wealth is accumulated in the hands of the capitalist class.

The working class does, in fact, deny itself the satisfaction of its desires. The workers are in a huge majority over the Capitalists. When they understand Socialism, they can, in spite of everything Sir Ernest says to the contrary, change the system. They can take over the means of wealth production, making them common property. They can arrange for the continued production of all necessary wealth and the manner of its individual appropriation and consumption.

The predominant features of Capitalism are not "work and saving," but class ownership of the means of life and wage-slavery. Even the "Socialists" put up by Sir Ernest Benn know that the system means exploitation of the working class. Whether they think the system was invented or whether they think it merely grew, matters little. They have grasped the essential fact—exploitation. It is but a short step to discover the manner of this exploitation:

the class ownership of the means of life and the merchandise character of human labour-power.

F. F.

## HERO WORSHIP.

A Conversation with a Visitor from Mars.

(continued from last month).

"Under modern conditions," I replied, "hero worship" is no longer a vital factor in social life. Capitalist society has the semblance of stability, and the devastating elements of feudal times, war, plague and famine, rarely shatter its equilibrium. The members of capitalist society, therefore, are, in the main, more calm and reflective than men of previous and more unsettled times; reason tends to curb sentiment, and personal fascination has, in consequence, little hold. Moreover, this apparent stability rests on a system of Democracy, which is not conducive to 'hero worship.' The present ruling class (the capitalists) are few in number, and with the development of their economic system, their numerical strength is constantly decreasing relatively to the other class in society (the workers). The stability of the capitalists' system depends, therefore, on the consent of the majority of the community. The workers consequently are invested with great potential power; they are beginning to realise vaguely that the 'masters' are not omnipotent, but rely upon their support, and this realisation tends to create assertion and shrewdness—qualities which spell death to 'hero worship.' In the words of De Toqueville, Marty, 'all men who live in democratic ages . . . are apt to relinquish the ideal, in order to pursue some visible and proximate object.'"

"Also, the tremendous populations in industrial countries have rendered government by a few individuals impossible; thus the committee system of government and administration has evolved, and this tends to check the undue prominence of any one particular man, and personal magnetism is subordinated to avowed principles. Thus, too, the members of the community, generally speaking, no longer vote for individuals but for political parties and the principles they enunciate; men vote, for instance, not for Mr. Spellbinder as an individual, but for Spellbinder as a member (for example) of the (alleged) Labour Party, and if Spellbinder joined the 'Land of Dope and Glory'

\* "Democracy in America."

Party he would speedily lose his old adherents and receive the support (possibly) of men holding Conservative views. It is evident, therefore, that apparent stability, extensive population, and Democracy, have all contributed to the death-blow of the 'heroic ideal.' But, like a small boy who keeps back the best portion of his dinner to the end, I likewise have reserved the most powerful reaction till now. Lafargue, in his 'Origin of Abstract Ideas,' points out that the barbarian social environment engendered by war and loyalty within the clan, stretched the heroic qualities—physical strength, courage, and moral stoicism—to their limit, whilst the capitalist environment, based on private property, has destroyed the 'heroic ideal' and has made egotism, intrigue, and cunning, cardinal virtues. The driving force of bourgeois society is the desire to make profit, and so (except in close personal relations) men unconsciously regard their fellows with favour or disdain in proportion to whether they think they can get little or much out of them. Likewise, the motives of even the most disinterested people are suspect; the opinion that 'so-and-so has an axe to grind' is, I believe, one of the most potent barriers to 'hero worship' at the present time. Incidentally, Marty, it is interesting to know that Marx and Engels, the first exponents of 'scientific' socialism, were probably the first men to recognise this fact that bourgeois society is incompatible with the heroic ideals, for in their Communist Manifesto they state 'the bourgeois has stripped of its halo every occupation hitherto honoured and looked up to with reverent awe. It has converted the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the man of science, into its paid wage labourers.'"

(To be continued.)

## S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS

### LONDON DISTRICT.

- Sundays:** Highbury Corner, 11.15 a.m.  
Clapham Common, 3 p.m.  
Victoria Park, 4 p.m.  
Tottenham, West Green Corner, 11.30 a.m.  
Paddington, Prince of Wales, 11.30 a.m.  
Bethnal Green, opposite Salmon and Ball, 7.30 p.m.
- Mondays:** Paddington, Prince of Wales, 8 p.m.  
Becontree, Burnside Road, and Green Lanes, 8 p.m.
- Wednesdays:** Hackney, Paragon Rd. and Mare St. 8 p.m.
- Fridays:** Clerkenwell, Almeida St., Upper St., N., 8 p.m.  
West Ham, Water Lane 8 p.m.  
Leyton, James Lane, High Road, 8 p.m.

### HANLEY BRANCH MEETINGS.

- Sundays:** Hanley, Market Square, 7 p.m.  
Burslem, St. John's Square, 7 p.m.



## BRANCH DIRECTORY.

- BATTERSEA.**—Sec., 2, Hanbury-road, S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns-road. Discussion second Thurs. in month.
- BECONTREE.**—Sec., S. Cash, 32, Greenway. Public invited.
- BETHNAL GREEN.** Branch meets Mondays, 8 p.m., at 2, Co-operative Buildings, 361, Bethnal Green-rd., E.2. Sec., D. Jacobs, at above address.
- BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec. E. Jesper, 35, Rollason-rd., Erdington. Branch meets The Continental Café, Moor St., 1st and 3rd Sundays at 11 a.m.
- CAMBERWELL.**—Sec., J. Goodfellow, 40, Solon New Road, Clapham, S.W.4. Branch meets at Camberwell Trades Council Room, 6A, Artichoke Place, Camberwell Green, every Friday at 8 p.m. Discussions—public invited.
- CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.
- CLERKENWELL.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at 17, Mount Pleasant, W.C.1. Discussions first Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.—all invited. Sec., at above address.
- EAST LONDON.**—Sec., A. Jacobs, 78 Eric-st., Mile-end, E.3. Branch meets first and third Mondays in month at above address.
- EAST HAM.**—Branch meets at 1, Tyrone-road, East Ham. Wednesdays at 8 p.m. Communications. Sec. at above address.
- EDINBURGH.**—Sec., 15, Barclay-place, Edinburgh.
- HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Saturdays, 7 p.m. at The Old Gravel Pit Hall, Mare-street, Hackney. Branch Business 1st and 3rd Mondays. Discussions 2nd and 4th Saturdays. Sec. at above address.
- HANLEY.**—Branch meets Tuesdays, Working Men's Club, Glass-st. Sec., C. Cook, 64, Sidney St.
- HULL.**—Branch meetings, Tuesday, at 8 p.m., at the Trade and Labour Club (Jarratt-street entrance). Discussion after meeting. All readers in Hull requested to attend.
- ISLINGTON.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 144, Seven Sister-rd., Holloway, N. Sec., M. Baker, 18, Orpingley-rd., N.7.
- LEYTON.**—Sec., A. Holland, 396, Lea Bridge-rd., Leyton. Branch meets 8 p.m., Trades and Labour Hall, Grove House, High-rd., every Monday. Public invited.
- MANCHESTER.**—Sec., W. Addison, 111, West Park-street, Salford, Manchester.—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month, 7.45 p.m. at 114, Duke St., Stretford-road.
- PADDINGTON.**—Branch meeting held on 2nd and 4th Fridays, 8 p.m., in room above the Co-operative Stores, 306, Kilburn-lane, W.9 (side door).
- SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Sec., J. Bird, 5 Welling-ton-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.
- TOOTING.**—Sec., 15, University-road, Collier's Wood, S.W. 19. Branch meets every Friday at 8 p.m. at Tooting Adult School, 971, Garratt-lane, S.W. 17.
- TOTTENHAM.**—Secretary 22, Dunloe-ave., N.15. Branch meets Fridays, Room 2, Trades Hall, 7, Bruce Grove. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.
- WALTHAMSTOW.**—Sec., S. E. Williams, 3, Dyson-rd., Leytonstone, E.11. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.

**WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107 Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at Secretary's address.

**WEST HAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford rd., Stratford. Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interests of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great HOLDS— Britain

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



# THE Socialist Standard

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[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

## INDUSTRIAL PEACE.

### THE CAPITALIST UTOPIA.

Once again we are being regaled in the Press and from the platform with unctuous rubbish concerning the desirability of "peace" in industry. The overwhelming fascination which the topic appears to possess for capitalist representatives and labour leaders alike only speaks for their mental bankruptcy and the fatal readiness of the workers to be deceived by promises.

Fifteen to twenty years ago Sir Christopher Furness, with his co-partnership scheme, stood in the limelight of publicity much as Sir Alfred Mond does at the present day. The only novel feature of the situation is the fact that there is now in existence a body which is supposed to stand for the interests of the bulk of the trade unionists in the country, *i.e.*, the General Council of the Trade Union Congress. The contempt which this body has for its supporters, and its utter disregard for their interests, was forcibly illustrated less than two years ago by its conduct of the so-called General Strike. Thanks to the treachery of this body, hundreds of thousands of the workers were victimised for their actions in response to their "leaders'" orders, without any serious attempt having been made to support the miners.

No wonder, then, that these champions of ignominious defeat and surrender, swollen-headed with all the self-importance of ignorance, should fall rapturously into the outspread arms of their class foes. What else can they do? They have neglected the great essential of working-class education, *i.e.*, Socialist propaganda; and have thus climbed to office by exploiting the support of followers who lack the understanding necessary to the prosecution of an intelligent and courageous conflict with the

exploiting class. They therefore enter into conference like whipped curs, hoping for conciliatory pats on their heads and a few bones to induce them to go quietly to their kennels.

What is to be the outcome of this hobnobbing of Trade Union officials with the representatives of capital? Can the workers expect to gain anything therefrom?

A few ideas in answer to these questions may be gathered from the "Manchester Guardian" supplement of November 30th, 1927, entitled "Industrial Relations." It consists of a symposium of the views of a number of prominent members of the master class, such as Sir J. Stamp and Sir A. Mond, and notorious Labour "leaders," such as MacDonald, Henderson, Clynes, Bevin, Citrine, Cramp, etc.

Sir Alfred Mond having taken the initiative in the recent conference, his views are of considerable interest. Dealing with what is termed the "rationalisation" of industry, he says:

The growth of larger industrial units does, however, bring immense problems in its train. For instance, if complete economy is to be effected, it may entail the shutting down of obsolete or unprofitable plant, the scrapping of redundant agencies and departments. Obviously, unless there is an immediate expansion of production, temporary unemployment must follow from this.

Of course, he goes on to lay stress on the word "temporary." Improved methods mean an increase in trade, we are told, and that in turn means more employment. The workers were told exactly the same tale over a century ago, when machinery was first introduced, but the nightmare of unemployment still haunts an ever-increasing proportion of workers.



It is obvious that, in order to smother the growing discontent of the workers under such conditions, some form of bluff is necessary, so Brunner, Mond & Co. instituted Works Councils, which have since been elaborated with the growth of the combine. This is supposed to secure the representation of the views and interests of the workers; but another article in the supplement dealing with Works Councils in Germany throws an interesting light on what actually happens under this arrangement.

Theoretically, the Councils are supposed to be able to appeal to the courts to prevent dismissals "on the grounds of victimisation, injustice, or undue hardship," but in practice, "the Councils cannot protect the employees against dismissal on the ground of trade depression or lack of work."

Dealing with the question of improved security and higher status (things we hear a lot about nowadays), Sir A. Mond goes on to say, "By inaugurating a Workers' Staff Grade . . . up to 50 per cent. of all workers of over five years' service will be eligible for election to the Staff, and *once promoted* they will enjoy rights similar to those enjoyed by the office staffs, including *weekly* instead of *hourly* rates of wages and the right to a month's *termination of employment*. The healthy rivalry for promotion . . . should mean *greater efficiency*." A typical capitalist dodge to intensify the competition between the workers, and thus wring more out of them.

Then, for the information of the workers, a monthly magazine is to be issued. In Germany, however, things are further advanced.

The Councils are empowered by the Act to nominate one or two of their members with full voting rights, on to the control boards of all companies, and, in the larger firms, to have submitted to them a balance sheet and profit and loss account for the establishment for which they are elected. The Councils may also demand verbal explanations from the employer as to the significance and composition of any of the items so submitted.

In practice these provisions of the Act have largely remained on paper. Even if the usual education and the experience of the Works Councils were sufficiently good to enable them to understand the information which they are entitled to receive—they would have derived little benefit owing to the effective methods taken by most employers to prevent the Works Councils from using their rights to obtain any information that might be regarded as confidential. It is notorious that balance sheets are rarely self-

explanatory, and it is usually impossible for the members of the Councils to check the accuracy of any additional data supplied.

The above is an illuminating reply to both Mond and the Trade Union officials who talk large about increased control of industry by the workers.

MacDonald opposes any application of what he calls book logic to capitalism. He criticises any attempt to apply the lessons of history to this notion of industrial peace.

He pays "unqualified tribute" to the railway companies' conciliatory attitude; and is only worried about the coalfields because some of his political supporters have been boycotted by the managers.

Citrine is all for the unions "actively participating in a concerted effort to raise industry to its highest efficiency by developing the most scientific methods of production, eliminating waste and harmful restrictions, removing causes of friction and avoidable conflict, and promoting the largest possible output so as to provide a rising standard of life and continuously improving conditions of employment." His objection to such systems as "Taylorism" is not the effects of the system, but the fact that they are "automatically introduced without consultation with the workers' representatives." He is quite prepared to support the exploitation of labour-power so long as he and his ilk supervise the sale thereof.

The other workers' (?) "representatives" follow in similar strain. So long as the trade unions officials are recognised and allowed to hold place and honour in the councils of the thieves, they are all in favour of peace. The testimonies of numerous capitalist apologists, statisticians and politicians, that the workers are relatively poorer than ever before, in spite of the accumulated powers of production, highly-developed efficiency, and all the rest of it, is simply ignored. Years ago, Seebohm Rowntree, Sir Charles Booth and others compiled the evidence showing the downward trend of the workers' conditions of living. Political hacks like Lloyd George and Chamberlain broadcast it to gain votes for their policies of reform.

Yet these alleged leaders of labour, these misleaders, can think of nothing more original as a solution of the evils that afflict the class that carries them on their backs than to support the employers' cry for "peace" and increased output.

The subject of the industrial conflict is the exact amount of blood, nerve and sinew that shall be sucked dry of energy in order that a small class of idlers may feast and frolic. The cause of the conflict is the fact that the idlers own the means by which alone the blood, nerve and sinew of the workers can be re-energised. Every increase in efficiency in the blood, nerve and sinew, every corresponding increase in its output, only heaps higher the wealth that the idlers waste. The sooner their maws are glutted, the sooner their wardrobes are crammed, the sooner their "ladies" are surfeited with cocktails and jewels—the sooner will the workers be "transferred" to the labour exchange or the Relieving Officer to feel the pinch of want.

Never has any capitalist, never has any labour leader produced a shred of evidence to conflict with this simple obvious fact. Similarly, not one of them dare deal with the only remedy. If the workers are to enjoy the fruits of their labour, they must own and control the means by which they produce them. The land, factories, railways, etc., must be made the common property of all to meet the needs of all.

That is what we mean by Socialism. It is to accomplish that which has led us to organise a Socialist Party. Forsake your masters and leaders and study the history and condition of your class for yourselves. You will then see that there has been no industrial peace since capitalism has existed—that your class has been compelled, from the day of its origin, to struggle for its existence, and that the struggle will go on until you discover the way to end it—by throwing the wealthy idlers from your backs—by using the political power which is yours whenever you choose to organise with us for Socialism. E. B.

## MANCHESTER.

### A LECTURE

ON

## Socialism & Revolution

AT

CHORLTON TOWN HALL,  
ALL SAINTS, MANCHESTER.

Sunday, FEBRUARY 12th, 7.30 p.m.

Speaker: A. KOHN

Admission Free. Questions & Discussion.

## WHAT DOES LIFE MEAN TO YOU?

To the present writer, about the most remarkable feature in modern life is the lack of interest displayed by the working class in their economic condition. They seem to accept their status of beasts of burden as a matter of course, a state of affairs to be put up with without grousing. A job of work seems to be the highest aspiration they have. Round that revolve their hopes and fears. A job of work brings them all the joy of life they ever know—food, clothing, shelter, a turn at the "pictures," a new gramophone record, fags, and a bob for "seed" for the "bird." For these things they start like horses on Monday morning, and finish like cows, complacently chewing the cud of future milking, on Saturday afternoon.

That cow-like satisfaction is, indeed, considered to be the hall-mark of the "respectable" working man who has "something to be thankful for," i.e., a job. Inasmuch as it is the sign of a contented mind, it is the highest of the virtues now that it is not fashionable to treat discontented minds to bullets and bayonets except as a last resource. And as the vast majority of the workers have jobs, contented minds are a vast majority also.

The miseries of the workless workers are patent. The worker out of work is conscious of his unhappy position. The writer has no desire to spend ink on that side of the case. But all the workless worker wants, as a rule, is work. Given that, and relieved of the immediate fear of losing it, he becomes as complacent as his fellows who know not what unemployment is.

Yet what is that "life" which they embrace with such equanimity? No farmer works his horses as long hours as he works his men. The workers live to work. They are instruments for the production of profit. The bread they eat, the clothes they wear, the houses they live in, are not so much necessities of life as necessities for the production of that labour-power, that energy, which is to be expended in the creation of profit. And, saddest thought of all, those who live only to labour and to exude profit, are so used to this aspect of life that they have become dead to the real meaning of the word.



To the savage mind, the wage worker is a "slave of a slave." What would the peasant proprietor of mediæval times have thought of the idea of bartering his whole life for the meagre means of maintaining it? And, before him, the serf, by no means a free man—how would he have received the bestial proposal? In no epoch have men succeeded in fastening on their fellows fetters so galling; never have they succeeded in so completely robbing vast populations of their lives, as under the wages system. In days of chattel slavery, though the slave's position as such was noon-day clear, no means existed of bringing him under such intense exploitation as in the case of the wage slave. As the farmer to-day does not work his horses so long as his men, because they are property and subject to deterioration, so the slave-owner could not proceed to extremities with his human cattle, for the reason that they also were property, subject to deterioration. Cases of brutality do not alter the general truth of this. No means of discipline capable of wide application existed under chattel slavery so effective as the fear of getting the sack is now to a wage earner.

So, in spite of all the superficial trappings of "civilisation," the "hewers of wood and drawers of water," those who *do* the weaving and the spinning which the lilies of the field do not do, are in some respects in worse case than the bondmen of any previous age. The mediæval worker, whether serf or peasant, truly worked in order to live. The products of his labour had a different meaning to him from that of the wealth produced by the modern worker. They were, for the most part, the means of his sustenance, created to enable him to live his day and enjoy it. A few weeks in the year—some 14 or 15—and he had wrested from nature his material requirements for the year.

To-day, existence for the workers has become, indeed, as the poet says: "Life's fitful fever." Because he is free (though afraid) to refuse to work for any particular master, the whole tragic truth of his slave condition is hidden from him. He sees himself as a free unit in a free system, less fortunate than some, but never so badly off but that he can find some poor devil in sorer straits. He gets a few hours off every week, but cannot see that they are merely respites from toil necessary for recuperation in the interests of his employer. He gets

so little leisure that his "pleasures" must be speeded up, like his work, in order that he may enjoy a bit of "life." But all his days are tainted with the fear of unemployment, and his very holidays, if he is lucky enough to get any, are poisoned by the thought that it is "back to work next week."

Oh, my fellow-workers, can you not see the tragedy of it all? You are being robbed of *life*. If it was merely your purse, you would kick hard enough. Why will you not challenge this insolent verdict of your masters that you are merely beasts of burden, existing only to produce profits for them, sacrificing your whole lives in order to make the world luxurious and glorious for them! The Carthaginian slave, chained to his master's portal, has engaged the pity of centuries; but the time will come when men, seeing with clearer vision, will revolt with even greater abhorrence from the spectacle of the modern worker chained to his machine. And how many thousands of to-day's hopeless toilers there are who would gladly accept the chains of the ancient bondman, with his security of food and shelter, and surcease of worry!

It is hardly to be expected that men and women who have not realised their grievances will take even the first step towards abolishing them. It is for this reason the fervent hope of the writer that these lines may turn the thoughts of those whom circumstances have not driven to desperation, to what life really is for them, and what it might be under a social system whose every activity was actuated by the motive of the greatest good and happiness of the members of the community. Those who have become desperate are not always the best material to work out the remedy for their ills. Those whose plight is not so bad may be in worse straits to-morrow. Let them, therefore, study the Socialist proposition, for that alone offers them the full and joyous life that should be theirs.

A. E. JACOMB.

### FULHAM, AWAKE!

Sympathisers of the party who are willing to join a local branch are invited to communicate with

The General Secretary,  
17, Mount Pleasant,

W.C.1.

## ARE OUR VIEWS ON RUSSIA CORRECT?

Below is a letter from an American reader, with our reply.

San Francisco Labor College,  
San Francisco.

Editor of SOCIALIST STANDARD.

I have been requested by some of the members of the Labor College to say a few words to you in regard to the last issue of the STANDARD.

On account of the front page article on "The Class Struggle in Russia," it became impossible for us to sell this issue at our regular meetings. The position taken in this article comes very dangerously close to the position taken by the anarchists in Russia to-day. You do not seem to grasp the difference between Democracy and Dictatorship. If the Bolsheviks did not act in a strong dictatorial manner, and had not acted in this way in the past, then the chances are about 9,999 out of a thousand that the capitalists would be in control of Russia to-day.

Trotsky is right in some of the criticisms that he makes. But on other things he is wrong, that is, if he is quoted correctly on democracy.

Also it has been called to my attention that, on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of Soviet Russia last November, the STANDARD did not have very much to say.

We value the SOCIALIST STANDARD on account of its lucid position on World Capitalism, but we would like to see it take a different attitude in regard to Soviet Russia. Yours for Socialism,

JOHN LOHEIT  
(Secretary).

### OUR REPLY.

Our critic makes a number of sweeping statements, but does not attempt to give particular instances of our alleged wrong policy, nor does he support his assertions with evidence. Our attitude on Russia is precisely the same as it was when the Bolsheviks seized power. We said then, and say now, that Socialism could not be established in that backward country, dominated as it is by an overwhelming majority of peasants and lacking a highly-developed industrial organisation. Neither the Bolsheviks nor any other dictators can revolutionise the economic basis of society

by issuing decrees, nor by exiling or imprisoning all who are guilty of pointing out these obvious facts. Our critic tells us that, if the Bolsheviks had not been dictatorial, the capitalists would almost certainly be in control of Russia to-day. If by this he means to make the astounding assertion that Socialism has replaced Capitalism in Russia, we challenge him to produce one single scrap of evidence. Apart from this, it is interesting to notice that one specific charge made by Trotsky is that Russian industry has become so utterly dependent on credits granted by German and other banks and traders, that in fact Russian policy is again dictated, as it was before the war, by German and other foreign financial groups.

Our critic has apparently overlooked the explicit statement in the article referred to that we could not guarantee the accuracy of Trotsky's estimates of conditions, and that we did not accept all his views on policy. We published the quotations for the information of our readers. Would our critics have us suppress all news and views which we find disagreeable, as is, it seems, the suicidal policy advocated by some of the communists?

If those who consider our Russian policy not in accordance with the facts and with the interests of the working class will point out wherein it is wrong, we shall be pleased to answer their objections. H.

### WOOLWICH DISTRICT.

## LECTURES

at Lakedale Hall, Lakedale Road,  
PLUMSTEAD.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 5th, at 8 p.m.

"How Socialism can be Established"

Lecturer: E. LAKE.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12, at 8 p.m.

"Why the Workers should join the Socialist Party."

Lecturer: E. FAIRBROTHER.

ADMISSION FREE. QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION

YOUR newsagent can obtain the "Socialist Standard" through the wholesalers, W. H. Smith & Son. Ask him to get your copy, but if you have any difficulty send direct to 17, Mount Pleasant, London, W.C.1.



## SOCIALISM AND "SUPERMEN." A CRITIC'S REJOINDER AND OUR REPLY.

London, N.W.5.

To the Editor of the SOCIALIST STANDARD.

Sir,—Your answer to my criticism of socialism in the December SOCIALIST STANDARD was very interesting, and I thank you for printing my letter. But why say that to-day is beloved of myself if I point out that exploitation, war and appropriation are features of all life, and are bound up in the function of living things; and that capitalism is a manifestation of the life process. I shall be even more interested if you can show that this is not a fundamental fact of all history up to the present moment. Especially as you seem to regard yourselves as authorities on that subject, and accuse me of ignorance.

You say that civilisations proceed from the changes in the material conditions of existence. Perhaps the S.P. might study the characters of the men who played a prominent part in the English rebellion, and find out whether Cromwell and his colleagues were not far different men than Charles I in appearance, in habits, and in tastes. Also whether the civilisation proceeding from that rebellion was marked by the puritanical avaricious character of the men who ruled it. It is human beings who make history; and the breeding, tastes and racial characteristics of those human beings set their mark upon a civilisation and give it its meaning and its peculiar form and excellence. Thus we have the noticeable variety and diversity of such civilisations as Egypt, Greece, the East, etc. To say that civilisations proceed from material conditions is equivalent to saying that pictures proceed from paint and brushes and not from artists. Civilisations, which are works of art on a grand scale, proceed from the race, and more particularly from the higher and more gifted members of that race. Why are the terms higher and lower men the cant and humbug of a ruling class? They are tangible, existing realities.

Next I come to your explanation of philanthropy. That it "has its roots either in a fear of a hereafter, the belief in a heaven or hell, or else a desire to achieve notoriety." But why precisely should a reward in the hereafter be expected to be earned by bestowing sums of money upon asylums for cripples, the insane, and the diseased—why should people fear not to do so, and why should such bestowals achieve fame on this earth? You say that this is no different from any other philanthropy—ancient or modern. But whenever did entry to Valhalla or Olympus depend upon exactly such terms? One had to possess far different qualifications to earn a place among the heroes. The reason that modern philanthropy takes the form it largely does, and the fame it obtains in so doing, is to be found in Christian morality. There everything weak, exhausted, declining and ailing is declared holy. The healthy, the vigorous, the triumphant are looked upon with suspicion. "The Lord has chosen the things that are not, to bring to naught the things that are, that no flesh shall glory in his presence," says Paul. The lowly were declared to be holy. This train

of thought has become uppermost. It has paved the way for the conception that evolution results in revolution; therefore it has paved the way for Socialism with its belief in the working-class as introducers of the next step in social evolution.

No wonder you distil from history the theory that it is a series of emancipations; and that the working-class, which is the bottom class, can establish a society in which there will be no privilege, no slavery, no poverty; instead, comfort, equality and freedom for all. But first, my dear fellows, you will have to discover a new sort of life, for none existing can be made to fit that nihilistic dream.

However, I regard it as quite possible so to weaken and suppress living beings that for long periods they will acquiesce in a tame and castrated society whose level is determined by the majority vote of its members. Your assurance that there is nothing in Socialism to prevent ideas being furthered, with the stipulation that this furtherance is not to the injury of the community, is a revelation of the sort of freedom permissible under Socialism. Everyone as agent of the community watching everyone else. What a community! What a conception of freedom! To offset this you say that to-day ideas that do not suit the ruling class are crushed at birth. Then how is it that the SOCIALIST STANDARD appears every month? And is quite old, I believe. Perhaps, after all, it was crushed at birth by somebody, as its ideas are very strange. But the Socialist seems unable to comprehend the simple explanation that life is a multifarious, changing, conflicting phenomena, wherein none are consulted as to whether they want it, and in which it is impossible to live, breathe, eat and breed without violating some other form of life.

Your accusation of robbery against the capitalist smacks of that pious fraud whereby existence was made to appear as a struggle of good against evil. And, as I pointed out in my criticism, it is an emanation from the vanquished and resentful, who thus find a way to get back at the victors. This cannot change the essential nature of life. But by misunderstanding life you can come to believe that it is possible to establish that simpleton's paradise "that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom." How little you know of life if you believe that. But I doubt if you do believe it. It is a bait with which you hope to draw the unhappy over to your side. A hollow fraud for dupes; a wretched self-deception; the heir of Christianity. The most tremendous falsehood that has ever existed.

—I am, Yours, etc., ROBERT HART.

### REPLY TO MR. HART.

In our previous reply to Mr. Hart we pointed out that his first letter consisted almost entirely of unsupported assertions, and we challenged him to give any evidence to support his defence of the claims of capitalists.

His second letter makes not the slightest attempt to meet this challenge, and supplies no evidence in support of his statements.

Instead of doing this he repeats his baseless assertions, and then calls upon us to prove a negative. This cheap, ancient, but badly-worn trick of the dodger in controversy, is useless when it is attempted to be played on any who have some acquaintance with the elements of logic and sense. Unless Mr. Hart is prepared to give something beyond mere assertion for his stale and exploded views, it is no business of ours to fall into his obvious trap by setting out to establish the contrary.

When Mr. Hart attempts to meet some of our points in the answer to his previous letter the results are childish. Thus he thinks he is refuting the fact that material conditions determine the form of society when he says this "is equivalent to saying that pictures proceed from paints and brushes and not from artists"! He is evidently mentally unable to distinguish between the tools one may use from the material conditions under which one must live.

This mental incapacity is further illustrated when he fails to see that his question on English philanthropy: "Why precisely should a reward in the hereafter be expected to be earned by bestowing sums of money upon asylums," etc., has already been answered by our pointing out that it is based upon a belief in a heaven and a hell. It is to seek the approbation or goodwill of the "God" believed in that such acts are taken. The Valhalla is not comparable with a heaven or a hell, as Mr. Hart would know if he had the slightest acquaintance with the facts of history.

To say that we will have "to discover a new sort of life" to live under Socialism is merely to say that Socialism has not existed before, which is one of the things we state ourselves.

Mr. Hart's last sentence certainly clears the air. Socialism is "a hollow fraud for dupes," "a wretched self-deception," "the most tremendous falsehood that has ever existed," etc. Here is the shriek of the apologist for Capitalism, who, unable to meet the facts and arguments of the Socialists, starts out with false assertions and ends up with a scream. Ed., COM.

### RECEIVED FOR REVIEW.

The Russian Experiment, 1917-1927, By K. T. SHAH (Taraporevala & Sons, Bombay). Price 2/-.  
Soviet Russia To-day. Report of British Workers Delegation 1927 (Labour Research Dept. Price 6d.

## PARTY ACTIVITIES.

A large crowd filled Earlham Hall, Forest Gate, on Wednesday, January 25th, to listen to a debate between the Socialist Party and the Young Liberal League on Socialism *versus* Liberalism. The Young Liberal speaker was Mr. Edward Baker, Parliamentary candidate of the Old Liberals of Howdenshire, and for many years a prominent Christian Evidence Lecturer. The case for Socialism was well maintained by Com. Kohn, and the usual anti-Socialist "case" easily scotched.

The Liberal speaker resorted to all the debating tricks to avoid dealing with the cause of poverty, and tried to use Russia as an illustration of Socialist failure, but got himself so tangled up that in his last reply he dropped it altogether.

## PAMPHLETS FOR SALE.

We have had a big demand for the pamphlets published by the Socialist Party of Canada and advertised for sale in the October "S.S." :—

"Wage-Labour and Capital" (Marx), 60 pages, 4d.

"Communist Manifesto" (Marx and Engels), 52 pages, 4d.

"Causes of Belief in God" (Lafargue), 48 pages, 6d.

"Socialism—Utopian and Scientific" (Engels), 95 pages, 6d.

"Value, Price and Profit" (Marx), 78 pages, 6d.

Note.—Postage extra: ½d. per copy.

## LECTURES.

FRIARS HALL, 237, BLACKFRIARS RD.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12th, 7.30 p.m.,

SOCIALISM AND REVOLUTION.

Speaker - E. BODEN.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26th, 7.30 p.m.,

SOCIALISM & TRADE UNIONISM.

Speaker - G. BELLINGHAM.

Questions and Discussion.

Admission Free.



**OFFICIAL NOTICE.**

All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 17, Mount Pleasant, London, W.C.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

**TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTIONS.**

Twelve Months, post free.. .. 2s. 6d.  
Six Months, post free .. .. 1s. 3d.

**The Socialist Standard,**

FEB.,



1928

## TEAR AWAY THE VEILS THAT BLIND!

The system that oppresses us to-day has centred in the hands of a few the control of the wealth produced by the many. Like an echo of this the blind strivings of the workers for freedom from oppression has centred the control of their organisations in the hands of a few trade union and political leaders. For decades the cult of leadership has lain like a blight on the struggles of the workers. The International Working Men's Association opened full of promise, but was split and broken by this foul disease; its successors were born with this birth-mark upon them and linger a living testimony of futility.

The parties that claim the suffrages of the working-class to-day are, with one exception, saturated with the worship of the "great." Avowed enemies, or professing friends, they alike deserve the uncompromising hostility of the workers.

The Labour Party, which opened its political career as the self-appointed guardians of the interests of the working class, after a long period of active work quenching the fires of revolution, and heading off almost every aspiration that promised progress to the workers, has finally graduated into the official opposition, the grave of dead hopes.

Its leaders preach and pen empty platitudes, futile reforms that have seldom even the merit of simplicity. Intellectually bankrupt, undisciplined and eternally torn with dissension, it forms a solid barrier across the path to working-class emancipation.

The Independent Labour Party, having been built up on the same shifting sands of reform, is useless, and worse than useless, for the purpose of achieving Socialism. It is irrevocably bound up with the Labour Party. It is in name "independent," but one single independent blow for Socialism would bring upon it the open opposition of the Labour Party machine, would rend it from top to bottom and destroy the illusion that it is a real political force.

The Communist Party spurns Parliament and watches leaders, in theory. In practice, it helps into prominence and position the ghouls of the social battlefield, and prepares a shambles for its guileless victims. With every change in the Russian situation it changes its policy and tactics. The "heroes" of yesterday are the "Petit Bourgeois" of to-day, and the "trusted leaders" of to-day will be the "traitors" of to-morrow. And as Russia, in harmony with historico-economic laws, daily proves more and more clearly that a society "can neither clear by bold leaps, nor remove by legal enactments, the obstacles offered by the successive phases of its normal development," so the water of capitalism enters the milk of Communism in increasing abundance. The latter loses its driving force, and the wiser political charlatans turn to the richer field of spoil in the Labour Party.

The Socialist Party of Great Britain was formed to propagate great principles and not "great" men. From the beginning the Party unflinchingly rejected all attempts at taking out of the hands of the working-class the control of its destiny, taking as a motto the watchwords, "The emancipation of the working-class must be the work of the working-class itself." The social sufferer, like the sick, is slow to grasp the cause of his sufferings and prone to place his trust in those who promise quick relief—at a price. Hence we, who urge the worker to raise himself and conquer the world for himself, have made headway very slowly, and only after much toil. But we have made progress. Slowly the seed we have sown is bearing fruit. Here and there through the world, modest though it be at

present, the germs of a greater International than the world has ever known is struggling into being. Here and there in the mighty cities that crowd the earth the voices of brother slaves have echoed our message: "Too long have the toilers been the playthings of the idle and the ambitious; let the capitalist world tremble at the upward march of its grave-diggers."

### WE ENTER THE PARLIAMENTARY FRAY. IF YOU WANT SOCIALIST CANDIDATES, NOW IS YOUR OPPORTUNITY.

We consider that the time has now come to test the wishes of the working-class in this country by putting forward Socialist candidates at the next Parliamentary elections.

We have been in existence for nearly twenty-four years. During this time we have propagated our views as widely as our modest means would permit. All the tortuous twistings of capitalism and its upholders have been subjected to the searching light of Socialist knowledge. The false friends who have dazzled the workers with fair promises in order to climb to place and power, have been shown up for what they are—birds of prey and passage.

When the war cloud burst over Europe and the East, the self-styled parties of labour failed to live up to their pre-war promises; they "united," they compromised, they squirmed and twisted, and finally developed into the thoroughly respectable "Party of the Opposition." In the meantime other groups sprang up like mushrooms, to pass into obscurity within a few short years. The "heroes" of yesterday have left the stage, taking with them their drums and trumpets, leaving not even a track behind them.

The war hit us a smashing blow. We had gradually built up our organisation until we were on the verge of projects like those of to-day. We refused to compromise our principles and, from the beginning to the end, kept the promise we had made in August, 1914:

"Having no quarrel with the working-class of any country we extend to our fellow workers of all lands the expression of our goodwill and Socialist fraternity, and pledge ourselves to work for the overthrow of capitalism and the triumph of Socialism."

The struggle to keep up our opposition and, at the same time, get a living in those difficult times scattered many of our members over the world. When the end of the orgy of useless carnage came in 1918, we had to pick up the threads once more and laboriously build up again our battered organisation. But we were sound at the core. Our basis is solidly grounded on the rock of knowledge, so that we have been able to weather the storm and build up our party once more.

Lately our progress has been so good that it has been forced upon us that we must now enlarge our activities and, by participating in elections, start upon the direct road for the conquest of the powers of government.

In spite of our progress, however, there is one direction in which we are relatively weak, and that is in finance. The money that keeps our organisation and our propaganda going is almost all subscribed by our own members—working-men who give up a portion of their hard-earned pence to finance the fight for Socialism. To meet the needs of the parliamentary contests this will not be enough, unless the workers join our ranks in masses and thereby become "one of us." An election contest is expensive, as a nomination fee of £150 has to be paid down before a candidate can take the field. Apart from this, however, the expenses need not be great—just the cost of leaflets and other literature, and the hire of halls for meetings. Still, £150 per candidate is a big proposition to an organisation of our present size. In order to meet this expense we have decided to open a fund to be known as "The Parliamentary Fund." To this fund we now heartily invite the generous subscriptions of all our sympathisers, and those who wish to see genuine Socialist candidates in the field. Our speeches, writings and actions over twenty-four years of strenuous activity are our credentials. All our meetings, propaganda, branch, and executive are, and have always been, freely open to the public, because we have nothing to hide and everything to gain by inspection.

Now is the opportunity for all those who have complained about the lack of a Socialist candidate to help to lay this first stone in what we may call the practical conquest of the powers of government.

The appearance at the polls of representa-



tives of a genuine Socialist Party would be a strong weapon in the spreading of Socialist knowledge. So far we have been compelled to move with halting steps owing to our financial poverty. Those who consider our principles and policy sound, and who are fortunately enough situated to subscribe, can give practical evidence of their wishes, and help speed the present system of private ownership out of existence.

There is one warning we wish to give. We would ask all those who are in the habit of subscribing to our general funds not to divert their subscriptions to the new fund. To do so would not assist us at all, as impoverishing the general funds would hamper us at once. We simply ask those who can spare more money, and deem the object worthy, to do what they can to help us put candidates in the field in order that we may make a direct attack upon the central seat of power, and take out of the hands of our oppressors the power they wield and the wealth they have stolen.

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### NEW PUBLICATIONS FUND.

Contributions to this fund are earnestly invited to assist us with the expense of publishing more literature.

## THE FOUNDERS OF MODERN SOCIALISM.

"Karl Marx and Frederick Engels," by Dr. Ryazanoff. (Martin Lawrence, Ltd. 7/6 net.)

This book of two hundred and twenty-one pages covers the lives and the collaboration of Marx and Engels, with an account of the historical background from which they emerged. The book is well done, without any appearance of bias, and the author criticises the work of others in the same field; for example, Franz Mehring, on certain details, though he sometimes makes assertions in opposition to accepted views without backing them with supporting quotations. This is particularly noticeable where he refers to the correspondence of Marx and Engels. Only fragments of this correspondence have so far been translated into English, so that the mere reference to the correspondence leaves English readers in the dark.

On page 138 there is a curious mistake. Paul Lafargue is stated to have been born in 1811 (seven years before Marx!) and to have died in 1877. In fact Lafargue was born in 1842 and died in 1911.

The book is open to the objection one would expect in one of so few pages covering lives so rich in activity. On some points the information is meagre; on others it is substantial.

\* \* \*

### EARLY INFLUENCES.

The opening pages give a fair account of the historical position in the early nineteenth century, and particularly the local conditions, different in detail, but similar in their general effect, that influenced first Engels and then Marx to take up a democratic standpoint. Both were born and spent their early days in the industrial provinces of the Rhine—Marx in Treves and Engels in Barmen. Marx came of a family of Jewish Rabbis, Engels of a family of German cloth manufacturers. Both had a University education. The Rhine province in the 'thirties of last century was the centre of much agitation on the part of the rising industrialists in their efforts to free themselves from the hampering influences of feudalism. This agitation first attracted both Marx and Engels, and eventually drew them into the progressive movement. Ryazanoff's sum-

mary of the period covers what is essential. Here is an example of his method:—

After 1831, as a result of the two events mentioned above [the July Revolution in France in 1830 and the Polish Rebellion of 1831], and despite the frustration of the July Revolution, we witness a series of revolutionary movements which we shall now cursorily review. We shall emphasise the events which in one way or another might have influenced the young Engels and Marx. In 1832 this movement was concentrated in Southern Germany—not in the Rhine province, but in the Palatinate. Just like the Rhine province, the Palatinate was for a long time in the hands of France, for it was returned to Germany only after 1815. The Rhine province was handed over to Prussia, the Palatinate to Bavaria, where reaction reigned not less than in Prussia. It can readily be understood why the inhabitants of the Rhine province and the Palatinate, who had been accustomed to the greater freedom of France, strongly resented German repression. Every revolutionary upheaval in France was bound to enhance opposition to the government. In 1831 this opposition assumed threatening proportions among the liberal intelligentsia, the lawyers Wirth and Liebenpfeifer arranged a grand festival in Hamburg. Many orators appeared on the rostrum. Börne too was present. They proclaimed the necessity of a free, united Germany. (Page 30.)

\* \* \*

### MARX AND RUSSIA.

Ryazanoff then gives a summary of the events and of the gradual development inside this movement of a movement of the German workers, the formation of the "League of the Just" and the "Workers' Educational Association."

On page 92 he says:—

To Marx, who had carefully studied the evolution of the Jacobin party, it seemed that in the next revolution, too, it would be possible to direct the forces which would develop spontaneously in the heat of prolonged political action. This premise explains his error. For long he held to this opinion, and a whole series of events were needed to make him renounce this premise. . . .

The Neue Rhenische Zeitung, relying upon the experience of the French Revolution, advocated the following tactics: War with Russia, it seemed, was the only means of saving the Revolution in Western Europe. The defeat of the Paris proletariat was the first blow at the Revolution. The history of the Great French Revolution showed that it had been the attack of the Coalition upon France that supplied the impulse for the strengthening of the revolutionary movement. The moderate parties had been thrown aside. The leadership had been taken over by those parties which were able to repel most energetically the external attack. As a result of the attack by the Coalition, France had been declared a republic on August 10, 1792. Marx and Engels expected that a war of the reactionaries against the new Revolution would lead to

similar results. That is why they kept on criticising Russia in the columns of their paper.

Unfortunately for his readers, Ryazanoff nowhere gives quotations showing that Marx and Engels held the views alleged above nor that they later renounced those views. The "Communist Manifesto," the "Address to the Communist League" in 1850, the article on the defeat of the Paris proletariat, written in 1848, the article on the German Revolution and oppressed nationalities of the same year, and the article in the "Neue Rhenish Gazette" of 1850 on Taxation Reform and the Social Revolution, certainly do not support the assertions. However, assuming that Marx and Engels were banking on a war with Russia to bring about a similar situation as obtained in France in 1792, the idea was not tested, since the Crimean War broke out long afterwards when circumstances, from a revolutionary point of view, had fundamentally changed. The alleged position was—war with Russia to save the revolution. As the war did not come the revolution was defeated, and the revolutionists imprisoned or scattered, a few finally gathering together in London to begin all over again. So that, assuming Marx and Engels held the view alleged, it looks as if they had correctly forecast the result and there would therefore have been no need for any renouncing.

\* \* \*

### "REVOLUTION AND COUNTER-REVOLUTION."

On page 105, writing of "Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Germany, the author states:—

Marx was credited with this book, but from their correspondence we now know that Engels was the author. However, ideologically it was the common work of Marx and Engels. The latter wrote it on the basis of facts that were supplied by Marx, and chiefly on the basis of the articles which they had both been writing for the "Neue Rhenische Zeitung."

Here, again, it is unfortunate that no quotation is supplied from the Marx and Engels correspondence to support the statement. Failing this information, I am bound to state that Ryazanoff appears to me to have overstated the position, and for three principal reasons. Firstly, Eleanor Marx, in her introduction to the collected edition of these articles, definitely gives the impression that they were the works of Marx, as the following quotations will show:—

The following articles are now, after forty-



five years, for the first time collected and printed in book form. They are an invaluable pendant to Marx's work on the *coup d'état* of Napoleon III. . . . Both works belong to the same period, and both are what Engels calls excellent specimens of that marvellous gift . . . of Marx . . . of apprehending clearly the character, the significance, and the necessary consequences of great historical events at a time when these events are actually in course of taking place, or are only just completed.

These articles were written in 1851-1852, when Marx had been about eighteen months in England.

That readers of these articles may have some idea of the conditions under which Marx was working, under which he wrote them and the "18th Brumaire," and was preparing his first great economical work, "The Critique of Political Economy," I again quote from my mother's notes.

Finally, I would remind English readers that these articles were written when Marx had only been some eighteen months in England, and that he never had an opportunity of reading the proofs.

The above is definite enough, and was written by Marx's daughter within a year of Engel's death.

In the second place, these articles are in style essentially Marx's, and thirdly, I have read somewhere, but unfortunately I cannot lay my hand on the quotation at the moment, that the first group of articles Marx wrote for the "New York Tribune" were sent to Engels for him to correct the English, as Marx had not yet acquired sufficient mastery of the written language. In view of the Marxian style of the articles, and not having had an opportunity of consulting the Marx and Engels correspondence, the latter appears to me the more likely explanation of what happened.

\* \* \*

#### LASALLE.

From page 113 onward there is an excellent explanation of the differences between Lasalle and Marx and Engels. The former took up the attitude of a Prussian democrat, which compelled him to abuse Austria, take up a gentle attitude towards Russia, and shower compliments on Napoleon the Third. Marx and Engels, on the other hand, in the interests of the international working class, attacked with equal relentlessness, all four contending parties. The curious part is that Lasalle, as well as Marx and Engels, claimed to be carrying out the fundamental principles of the "Communist Manifesto."

#### THE INTERNATIONAL.

From page 138 onwards there is a discussion of the foundation of the 1st International. Ryazanoff disputes the common view that the foundation of the International Workingmen's Association originated in the world exposition that took place in London in 1862 to which continental workers came and mixed with English workers at a reception held in honour of seventy French delegates. He points out that the whole business was arranged by the employers and that nothing was said at the reception that could in any way offend the employers, and that the English trade unionists refused to have anything to do with the affair. That the American Civil War of 1860-1865 and the Polish insurrectionary movement of 1862-1863 were the real instigators of movements that led to the foundation of the International. Here are some extracts which will better explain his attitude:—

But now two very important events happened, the first of which was the American Civil War (1860-1865). We have already seen that the abolition of slavery was the most important problem of the day. It became so acute and it had led to such an acrid conflict between the Southern and the Northern States, that the South, in order to preserve slavery, determined to secede and to organise an independent republic. The result was a war which brought in its train unexpected and unpleasant consequences to the whole of the capitalistic world. The Southern States were then the sole growers of the cotton which was used in all the cotton industries of the world. Egyptian cotton was still of very little importance. East India and Turkistan were not producing any cotton at all. Europe thus found itself without any cotton supply. The textile industries of the world were experiencing a crisis. The shortage of cotton caused a rise in the prices of all the other materials in the textile industry. Of course, the big capitalists suffered, least of all, the petty capitalists hastened to shut down their factories. Tens, nay hundreds of thousands of workers were doomed to perish of hunger.

The Governments confined themselves to handing out pitiful pittance. The English workers who had not long before, during the strike in the building trades, shown an example of solidarity, now, too, took up the cause of organising help. The initiative belonged to the London Trades Council, which appointed a Special Committee. In France also, there was organised a Special Committee for this purpose. The two Committees were in frequent communication with one another. It was this that suggested to the French and English workers how closely allied were the interests of labour of different countries.

Another event then occurred which was also of equal interest to the workers of the different countries. Serfdom was abolished in Russia

(1861). Reforms in other branches of the political and economic life of Russia were imminent. The revolutionary movement became more animated, it advocated more radical changes. Russia's outlying possessions, and chiefly Poland, were in a state of commotion. The Czar's government grasped at this as the best pretext of getting rid of external as well as internal sedition. It provoked the Polish revolt, while at the same time, aided by Katov and other venal scribes, it incited Russian Chauvinism at home. The notorious hangman, Nfuvaviev, and other brutes like him, were commandeered to stifle the Polish revolt.

In Western Europe, where hatred for Russian Czarism was prevalent, the rebellious Poles evoked the warmest sympathy. The English and French governments allowed the sympathisers of the Polish insurgents complete freedom of action, regarding this as a convenient outlet for the stored-up feelings of resentment. In France a number of meetings were held, and a committee, headed by Henri Toulain (1828-1897), and Peruchon, was organised. In England the pro-Polish movement was headed by the workers, Odger and Cremer, and by the radical intellectual, Professor Beesly.

In April, 1863, a monster mass meeting was called in London. Professor E. S. Beesly (1831-1915), presided; Cremer delivered a speech in defence of the Poles. The meeting passed a resolution which urged the English and the French workers to bring simultaneous pressure to bear upon their respective governments and to force their intervention in favour of the Poles. It was decided to provide for an International meeting. This meeting took place in London on July 22nd, 1863. The chairman was again Beesly. Odger and Cremer spoke in the name of the English workers, Toulain in the name of the French. Nothing but the Polish affair was discussed, and they all insisted on the necessity of restoring independence to Poland. On the next day another meeting took place, to which the historians of the International have not paid much attention. It was arranged on the initiative of the London Trades Council, this time without the participation of the bourgeoisie. Odger had been advocating closer ties between English and Continental labour. The problem presented itself on a practical basis. English labour had to take note of the serious competition of the French, the Belgian and particularly the German workers. At the beginning of the 'sixties, the bread-baking industry which was already concentrated into great enterprises was wholly operated by German workers. In the building, furniture and decorative industries there was an influx of Frenchmen. That was why the English trade unionists valued so much any possible chance of influencing foreign labourers who were pouring into England. This could best be accomplished through an organisation which would unite the workers of various nations.

It was decided that the English workers send an appropriate address to the French workers. Almost three months elapsed, while the draft of this address was being offered to the London trade unionists, for approval. It was written largely by Odger. (Pp. 140-143.)

#### MARX AND THE INTERNATIONAL.

On September 28th, 1864, the meeting was held that founded the International. Ryazanoff points out that Marx took no part in the initial stages and was only an invited guest to this meeting. Ryazanoff's attitude agrees in the main with statements of Frederick Lessner in "Recollections of an Old Communist" (page 33), and a letter, addressed by Marx to Engels, translated by Max Beer and published in the "Labour Monthly" in the latter half of 1923. Liebnicht, in his "Memoir" of Marx, bears out a portion of it, but the inference from his remarks is that Marx indirectly inspired the movement. At the same time it is curious and suggestive that Marx should have been invited to the meeting of September 28th. I would quote extensively from each of the above, but I have already overloaded this article with quotations. However, I cannot refrain from some quotations on this point as they illustrate how frail is human testimony where reliance is placed on memory alone. In his letter to Engels Marx says:—

A certain Le Lubez, a Frenchman, who speaks an excellent English, was sent to me to inquire whether I would take part on behalf of the German workmen, and send a German workman to speak in that meeting. I sent Eccarius, who acquitted himself exceedingly well, while I assisted as a dumb figure on the platform.

Now for Lessner:

The English committee invited also the Communistische Arbeiter-bildungsverein to this meeting, and at the same time expressed a wish that Marx should attend this international fraternisation of the working men. The Communistische Arbeiter-bildungsverein sent me to Marx. I informed him of the wish of the English workmen, and after some inquiries as to the conveners and the object of the meeting, Marx consented to come.

Now hear Liebnicht:

This idea [an international association] assumed a more definite form, when in the spring of 1864—and again in April—a delegation of workers came from Paris, which resolved in a conference with German, Polish, English and American delegates to call an international delegates' meeting for the purpose of founding the "International Workingmen's Association," and to entrust Marx with the preliminary work.

Five months later, on the 28th of September, 1864, in the memorable meeting at St. James's Hall, London, the "International Workingmen's Association" was founded.

Marx's letter, of course, was written about the time of the events, whilst both Lessner and Liebnicht were writing over thirty years later.

Beginning on page 183, there is a good



account of the struggle within the International between the Marxians and Bakunin and his followers. I would particularly recommend this part to the English ultra-Bolsheviks. On the same point I cannot refrain from quoting from a letter written by Engels to Marx in March, 1852, in which Engels says:—

Bakunin has only become of some importance because no one knows Russian. And the old pan-Slav trickery that the old Slav communal ownership can be transformed into communism, and that the Russian peasants are to be regarded as born Communists, will again be widely canvassed. (The Life and Work of Frederick Engels by Zelda Kaban-Coates, published by the Communist Party of Great Britain, 1920.)

\* \* \*

#### THE INAUGURAL ADDRESS.

On page 155 Ryazanoff quotes certain paragraphs from the Inaugural Address of the International as follows:—

Considering that the emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves; that the struggle for the emancipation of the working classes means not a struggle for class privileges and monopolies, but for equal rights and duties, and the abolition of all class rule;

That the economical subjection of the man of labour to the monopoliser of the means of labour, that is, the sources of life, lies at the bottom of servitude in all its forms, of all social misery, mental degradation, and political dependence;

That the economical emancipation of the working classes is therefore the great end to which every political movement ought to be subordinate as a means;

That all efforts aiming at that great end have hitherto failed from want of solidarity between the manifold divisions of labour in each country, and from the absence of a fraternal bond of union between the working classes of different countries;

That the emancipation of labour is neither a local nor a national, but a social problem, embracing all countries in which modern societies exist and depending for its solution on the concurrence, practical and theoretical, of the most advanced countries;

That the present revival of the working classes in the most industrious countries of Europe, while it raises a new hope, gives solemn warning against a relapse in the old errors, and calls for the immediate combination of the still disconnected movements.

\* \* \*

#### THE "RUSSIAN COMMUNISTS" AND MARX.

Immediately following these quotations, Ryazanoff makes the following remark:—

A careful perusal of these points reveals how closely the Communist Party of Russia had, in some planks of its programme, followed the theses formulated by Marx.

Now I do not know to which particular

programme the author refers, but the programmes I have read have not shown any marked likeness to the above theses. For instance, if one compares the first paragraph in the above theses with the following quotation, taken from the "Resolutions and Regulations of the 9th Congress of the Russian Communist Party" (29th March—4th April, 1920) a remarkable unlikeness will be noticed:—

The Congress makes it obligatory to all the members of the Party mercilessly to fight that particularly obnoxious form of ignorant conceit which deems the working class capable of solving all problems without the assistance in the most responsible cases of specialists of the bourgeois school. The demagogic elements who speculate on this kind of prejudice of the more backward section of our working classes can have no place in the ranks of the Party of Scientific Socialism.

Registration of individual output or productivity of labour and the granting of individual premiums, must also be carried out in a way suitable to administrative technical staff. Better conditions must be secured for our best administrators and engineers to enable them to make full use of their capacities in the interests of social economy.

A special system of premiums is to be established for those specialists under whose guidance the workers can attain the necessary qualifications to make them capable to accept further independent posts.

Or again, take the programme drawn up at the beginning of 1919 on the occasion of the first call for the 3rd International, which invited as participants the "Syndicalist elements of the workers" and the various national groups of the industrial workers of the world. Paragraph 7 states:—

The most important method is the mass action of the proletariat, including armed struggle against the government power of capitalists.

This paragraph is made clearer by the first President of the Executive Committee of the International, Zinoviev, in a document dated September 1st, 1919, which includes the following paragraph:—

What we would particularly emphasise is the following: The real solution of the question is to be found, under all circumstances, outside Parliament, in the street. That strikes and insurrections are the only methods of resolute war between Capital and Labour is now clear. (The Socialist Review, p. 272, July, 1920.)

Now if there was one thing against which the 1st International set its face determinedly from the very beginning it was the policy of street fighting and the barricade. It was out of matters like this that the struggle with the Bakuninites arose, and moved Marx to state, after the Congress at

The Hague in September, 1872 (the last Congress of the 1st International):—

A group had arisen in our midst which proclaimed working-class abstinence from political work.

We deemed it our duty to declare how dangerous and how threatening such opinions may become for our cause.

The worker must, sometime, get the political power into his own hands in order to lay the foundation of a new organisation of labour. He must overthrow the old political system that upholds the old institutions unless he is ready like the old Christians—to sacrifice the "kingdom of this world." (Taken from "The Class Struggle," Vol. 2, May-June, 1918, No. 3.)

In conclusion, however, in spite of the criticism I have offered of the book, it is well worth reading, and contains much valuable information in a handy form.

GILMAC.

#### HERO WORSHIP.

##### A Conversation with a Visitor from Mars.

(Continued from last month).

While I had thus enlarged upon my theme, the Martian had been nodding in an acquiescing sort of way, but now his face clouded and he exclaimed, "How, then, do you account for the interest attached to the persons of pugilists, film stars, labour leaders, and other adventurers whose exploits fill up so much space in your daily papers?"

"The interest awakened by nonentities such as sheikhs of the screen," I replied, "may be termed a farcical and spurious 'hero worship.' These worthies (except by a few hysterical individuals) are not—as the Daily Gossips would have us believe—regarded with adulation at all, but are looked upon, in the main, with feelings varying from mild interest to sheer contempt. It is evident to Socialists that these "heroes" are mere puppets paraded before the workers in an endeavour to keep their thoughts off vital social problems; if one's mind is occupied with an account of Charles Chaplin, comedian, it cannot, at the same time, be concentrating on the motives of Mr. Golde-Baggs, financier. The worker, wearied with the trials of this world of hard reality, can thus rid himself of his worries by escaping—via the Screen or Press—into the 'wonderland' of romantic swashbucklers and pseudo-gallants, and can, moreover, shirk the safeguarding of his interests by putting his trust in 'leaders.' Capitalists, in fact,

take advantage of the tradition of 'hero-worship,' which still lingers on (for 'traditions die hard'), for the dual object of concealing their plans, and keeping the working class in a state of confused and dazed thought. But it is in times of stress and of peril to their existence, that the ruling class exploit this tradition most. Thus at the commencement of the recent war, dunderheaded old soldiers suddenly became brilliant military geniuses, and clap-trap orators were regarded as 'heaven-sent' statesmen. But their glory has been short-lived; the 'wizard from Wales' has fallen from his pedestal, and the generals have crept back into oblivion. There is no doubt, Marty, the war-time 'great men' were simply marionettes made to jig and dance at the bidding of the master class. They fulfilled the purpose of arousing the 'patriotic' passions of the people to white heat, and by stuffing them with spurious ideals made them protectors of property not their own, and tools for gaining fresh territories and resources for their masters. Even to-day, my friend, in two European countries, a pair of 'great men'—the octogenarian Hindenburg and the former demagogue, Mussolini—are vested with the semblance of supreme power; but their rule is simply an example of the way in which predatory financiers, and the like, exploit the tradition of 'hero-worship' by hiding their class oppression under the gestures of these showy 'personalities.' There exists now a mere superstructure of exploited traditional 'hero-worship,' instead of the basic 'hero-worship' of earlier communities.

(To be continued.)

#### S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS

##### LONDON DISTRICT.

- Sundays** Highbury Corner, 11.15 a.m.  
Clapham Common, 3 p.m.  
Victoria Park, 4 p.m.  
Tottenham, West Green Corner, 11.30 a.m.  
Paddington, Prince of Wales, 11.30 a.m.  
Bethnal Green, opposite Salmon and Ball, 7.30 p.m.
- Mondays** Paddington, Prince of Wales, 8 p.m.  
Becontree, Burnside Road, and Green Lanes, 8 p.m.
- Wednesdays** Hackney, Paragon Rd. and Mare St. 8 p.m.
- Fridays** Clerkenwell, Almeida St., Upper St., N., 8 p.m.  
West Ham, Water Lane 8 p.m.  
Leyton, James Lane, High Road, 8 p.m.

##### HANLEY BRANCH MEETINGS.

- Sundays** Hanley, Market Square, 7 p.m.  
Burslem, St. John's Square, 7 p.m.



**BRANCH DIRECTORY.**

**BATTERSEA.**—Sec., 2, Hanbury-road, S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns-road. Discussion second Thurs. in month.

**BECONTREE.**—Sec., S. Cash, 32, Greenway. Public invited.

**BETHNAL GREEN.**—Branch meets Mondays, 8 p.m., at 2, Co-operative Buildings, 361, Bethnal Green-rd., E.2. Sec., D. Jacobs, at above address.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec. E. Jesper, 38, Rollason-rd., Erdington. Branch meets The Continental Café, Moor St., 1st and 3rd Sundays at 11 a.m.

**CAMBERWELL.**—Sec., J. Goodfellow, 40, Solon New Road, Clapham, S.W.4. Branch meets at Camberwell Trades Council Room, 6A, Artichoke Place, Camberwell Green, every Friday at 8 p.m. Discussions—public invited.

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

**CLERKENWELL.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at 17, Mount Pleasant, W.C.1. Discussions first Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.—all invited. Sec., at above address.

**EAST LONDON.**—Sec., A. Jacobs, 78 Eric-st., Mile-end, E.8. Branch meets first and third Mondays in month at above address.

**EAST HAM.**—Branch meets at 1, Tyrone-road, East Ham. Wednesdays at 8 p.m. Communications. Sec. at above address.

**EDINBURGH.**—Sec., 15, Barclay-place, Edinburgh.

**HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Mondays, 8 p.m. at The Old Gravel Pit Hall, Mare-street, Hackney. Branch Business 1st and 3rd Mondays. Discussions 2nd and 4th Mondays. Sec. at above address.

**HANLEY.**—Branch meets Tuesdays, Working Men's Club, Glass-st. Sec., C. Cook, 64, Sidney St.

**HULL.**—Branch meetings, Tuesday, at 8 p.m., at the Trade and Labour Club (Jarratt-street entrance). Discussion after meeting. All readers in Hull requested to attend.

**ISLINGTON.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 144, Seven Sister-rd., Holloway, N. Sec., M. Baker, 18, Orpingley-rd., N.7.

**LEYTON.**—Sec., A. Holland, 396, Lea Bridge-rd., Leyton. Branch meets 8 p.m., Trades and Labour Hall, Grove House, High-rd., every Monday. Public invited.

**MANCHESTER.**—Sec., W. Addison, 111, West Park-street, Salford, Manchester. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month, 7.45 p.m., at 114, Duke St., Stretford-road.

**PADDINGTON.**—Branch meeting held on 2nd and 4th Fridays, 8 p.m., in room above the Co-operative Stores, 306, Kilburn-lane, W.9 (side door).

**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Sec., J. Bird, 5 Wellington-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.

**TOOTING.**—Sec., 15, University-road, Collier's Wood, S.W. 19. Branch meets every Friday at 8 p.m. at Tooting Adult School, 971, Garratt-lane, S.W. 17.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Secretary 22, Dunloe-ave., N.15. Branch meets Fridays, Room 2, Trades Hall, 7, Bruce Grove. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.

**WALTHAMSTOW.**—Sec., S. E. Williams, 3, Dyson-rd., Leytonstone, E.11. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.

**WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107 Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at Secretary's address.

**WEST HAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford rd., Stratford. Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interests of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great HOLDS— Britain

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



# THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

No. 283. Vol. 24.]

LONDON, MARCH, 1928.

[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

## MOSCOW ORDERS MORE COMMUNIST SOMERSAULTS

"The United Front" preached by the Communist Party was to help the Labour Party achieve power and the Communists to get inside the party in power. In pushing this policy the Communists supported every Labour leader and betrayer of the working class—industrial and political. But as the plums of office and place were eagerly sought after by the lights of the Labour Party and I.L.P., the competition of the Communists for the same trade union jobs and political positions were not welcomed.

The Communist Party, however, used every excuse for their policy of assisting the enemies of the working class in the hope of being allowed to become the leaders of these fraudulent parties themselves.

In the February Communist *Review* we are given the thesis of the British Communist Party, from which we quote the following:—

"The proposition that the Party should run candidates against Labour candidates cannot facilitate the task of the Party in winning over the mass of the workers, but, on the contrary, will actually impede it. . . . To come out and oppose Labour candidates that have the backing of the local Labour movement adds nothing to the independent role of the Party, but will only have for its result the creation of an unnecessary barrier between the Party and the mass of the workers standing behind the Labour Party, whom it is our duty to win for Communism. It is not a tactic calculated to strengthen the Communist Party against the reformists, but, on the con-

trary, a tactic calculated to strengthen the reformist leaders against the Communist Party.

"If our Party opposed Labour candidates on a wide scale, without winning the support of the local Labour movement, it would be regarded not as a blow to the reformist leadership, but at the Labour Party as such, and thus its working class supporters. The consequence of this policy would be to drive away support from our Party in the Trade Unions, as well as in the Labour Party, and would, therefore, have the opposite result from what is intended."

In the course of the article we are told that: "Even in the case of MacDonald, Thomas, Henderson & Co., the party cannot (1) advise the workers to vote Liberal or Tory, (2) advise mere abstention, (3) put up a candidate who would let in the Liberal or Tory."

Those who have read the long programmes of reform advocated by the Communist Party which we have quoted in these columns will be prepared for all kinds of gymnastics of this party of reform, armed action, Soviets, 4 pounds per week, and other mixtures. But hardly had Communists finished explaining how brilliant was the defence of their tactics in the February Communist *Review*, before orders were received from Moscow to run candidates against the Labour Party.

But, as is to be expected, they are not to run as Communists. To get more votes for a so-called Labour programme the C.P. are to use the disaffiliated local Labour Parties for their purpose and run as rival Labour



candidates. In other districts they can give active support to Labourites who pledge themselves to accept the Communist Party into the Labour Party. They are to put up candidates against the members of the General Council of T.U. Congress, even though in 1926 they demanded all power and all support to this same General Council.

The *Workers' Weekly*, the alleged organ of the C.P. (24th February), states, in the despatch from Moscow, that as "considerable sections of the masses still follow the reformist leaders, it is absolutely necessary to propose the united front both nationally and locally"—and so we read later that voting for Labour Party candidates in districts where there are C.P.-ers running is only to be decided on after they have tried to run their own or Left Wing candidates.

They are to oppose official Labour candidates—but not always. They are to expose them—but to lend them support with votes because of the united front. The C.P. is to have their own slogans—but to vote for other slogans where their own are absent!

When Communists tell us we can't educate the workers into Socialism we wonder what the workers will understand after being educated into these contradictory, jesuitical and bewildering tactics in support of a fraudulent Labour Party or a fake Labour programme.

The fact that they still intend to barter support for Labour candidates on condition of being allowed inside the Labour Party proves that their "new" tactics are simply a scheme to compel the Labour leaders to admit them under penalty of losing votes to rival Labour candidates and possibly losing the seat.

This supplies added evidence of the fraud of the Communist Party in claiming to be revolutionary.

The Socialist Party, however, stands for the simple object of Socialism, and its candidates will seek support for Socialism alone. A. K.

## GET TOGETHER!

Readers of the "Socialist Standard" who desire to be put into communication with other readers in their district are invited to notify the General Secretary, at 17 Mount Pleasant, W.C.1.

## WHY UNEMPLOYMENT ABOUNDS IN U.S.A.

How long is it since the Press and politicians, Labour leaders and economists, were all pointing to America as the land of work and prosperity? Special Commissioners spent a whole week in that vast country and filled newspapers with articles on the "Secrets of High Wages."

Now, however, the papers are "trying" to discover the Secret of No Wages in America for millions of willing workers. The representative of the American Federation of Labour told the American House of Commons that 4 millions were out of work. The correspondent of the Conservative *Daily Telegraph* (February 9th) reports as follows:—

No official statistics regarding the number of unemployed in the United States are available, but the figure is roughly estimated at between 3,000,000 and 4,000,000, some estimates placing the total at between 9 and 10 per cent. of the total number of workers.

Most of the newspapers have called attention to the reopening of "bread lines" and the rapid increase of begging on the streets of "God's country."

We are told that conditions are rapidly approaching the situation of 1920-1921 when over 6 millions were out of work.

The myth of high wages and large savings is quickly being exposed by the widespread appeals of charities and welfare centres for help, and the fears that the "property" bought on instalments by workers will not be paid for. Such property, usually bought on instalments of one dollar down and the rest later on, includes clothes, furniture, books, gramophones, and, in fact, all the "vast" and peculiar property of the workers. The motors and houses that loom large in reports of American labour prosperity are now exposed as the property of the capitalists used by the workers as long as they can pay instalments.

Unemployment is obviously a world evil and not a national one. It is not merely European, but International. It exists in the so-called prosperous countries like America as well as "backward" countries like Russia. The calm assumption that America had disproved Karl Marx's ideas is again exposed by the large extent of poverty and unemployment in the much-vaunted richest country.

America prided herself on being beyond

the dangers affecting countries depending on a foreign market. The United States claimed that only ten per cent. of her wealth was exported—the rest being for the great "home market." But what is the home market? It is composed of workers and capitalists as consumers.

The capitalists are few compared with the rest and they therefore can't consume most of the wealth. The workers can only buy as much as their wages amount to, and in America wages are a small proportion of the total output of industry, which is very efficient in production. That mass production and highly-developed machine system of America (so much advocated as our remedy here) has produced the problem of problems for the giant trusts and companies there. How can the products be disposed of? The products must be sold if the owners can realise their profits. The modern U.S.A. factory can produce more wealth with less hands than formerly and so the home market is made up of millions on a barely existing wage and the rest without wages at all. More and more, therefore, the owning class have turned to the export trade to South America and the East, but the other countries are also seeking trade there, and some of the countries once America's customers, like Japan, are now America's rivals.

The Home Market in America can be supplied very rapidly because of that increasing output of the modern machine plant, and consequently the unemployment of millions is a regular thing in the United States, as it is in Europe. The uncertainty of the "workers'" job is greater there because of the larger output per man in the centralised and trustified organisation of industry.

So in the world's most productive country, where millionaires and luxury abound amongst the owning class—there is want, bitter want for millions. Charities are appealed to and the out-of-work has to "pan-handle" or beg for a cup of coffee on the street in competition with crowds of his fellows.

So even though problems of production are easily solved—the worker is left to want. Unemployment is due to a condition common to every capitalist country—that is private ownership of the means of living.

The hope of the worker in the U.S.A. is the hope of the worker in Europe and Asia—that is common ownership of the means of production and distribution—Socialism.

A. KOHN.

## A DEFENCE OF THE I.L.P. AND OUR REPLY.

We print below a letter from a correspondent and our comments on same:—

Davenport Road,  
Catford, S.E.6.

27.1.28.

Dear Comrades,

As a member of the I.L.P., may I be allowed to correct a mis-statement in your issue of November last? In your reply to "I.L.P.-er" (Croydon) you state: "It will be news to us that the I.L.P. propose to abolish private ownership. It will also be news to the I.L.P." Of the first part of that statement I can but express my doubt. Of the second I can give a direct contradiction by quoting the object of the Party, which is printed on page 3 of the membership cards:

"Object—The establishment of the Socialist Commonwealth."

"The Socialist Commonwealth is that state of society in which Land and Capital are communally owned."

This object is similar to your own.

Will you be candid enough to publish this statement? I hope so! Of the rest of that reply I will not deal, as I have no doubt that the comrade who was responsible for it has since felt ashamed of it. If he is not I shall be very glad to explain to him why he ought to be.

With every fraternal wish to your party and our cause,

Yours,  
"I.L.P.-ER" (Catford).

## REPLY.

This correspondent objects to the reply given to "I. L. P.-er, Croydon" (see November issue), that the I.L.P. is not in favour of the abolition of the private ownership of the machinery of production. To support his contention, he quotes the I.L.P. declaration that its object is the "communal" ownership of "Land and Capital." This, he says, is an object similar to our own. That statement merely illustrates his own and his organisation's confused thinking. Capital is money invested with a view to obtaining a profit by the employment of wage-earners. "Capital" cannot therefore be "communally" owned. Socialism or communal ownership involves the abolition of the wages system, the abolition of a



propertied class and a wage-earning class, the abolition of capital. The means of production, land, factories, railways, etc., will be owned by the community, and it will no longer be possible for a propertied class to live by owning property: the means of production will not then be "capital."

As was pointed out in our earlier reply, the I.L.P. programme does not involve the abolition of the right of property owners to live by owning property. It merely proposes that "The present shareholders in mines and railways could receive State mines or railway stock based on a valuation and bearing a fixed rate of interest" (The Socialist Programme (p. 24), published by the I.L.P.). In short, it proposes to replace individual and company capitalism by State capitalism. The object of the I.L.P. is to reform capitalism. The object of the S.P.G.B. is to abolish capitalism and establish Socialism. Our aims are therefore not similar; they are irreconcilably opposed.

As we have many times demonstrated, the reform known as Nationalisation, or State capitalism, is not beneficial but directly harmful to the working class, even considered as an immediate policy. Further, it is not a step towards Socialism.

With regard to the remainder of the above letter, it is worthy of notice that our original I.L.P. critic from Croydon has not contested the adequacy of our reply or the accuracy of our criticisms of the I.L.P. programme. I.L.P.'er, from Catford, intervenes on his behalf and can offer nothing better than childish remarks on the "shame" which we ought to feel for having made unchallenged statements about the I.L.P.'s position.

H.

## BATTERSEA LECTURE

At the TOWN HALL (SMALL HALL)  
SUNDAY, MARCH 11th  
AT 7.30 P.M.

SUBJECT:

"A Challenge to the Reform Parties."

Speaker: G. BELLINGHAM.

Questions and Discussion.

Admission Free

### MONEY AND PRICE.

#### A CRITIC'S REJOINDER AND OUR REPLY.

Sir,

Mr. A. E. Jacomb, writing under above heading, fondly imagines that he replies to Rimington, whereas he does nothing of the sort. His greatest coup is a slip on my part wherein, by accident, I inverted the exchange rate of the £1 to the Dollar. Such cheap scoring is beneath contempt; and Mr. Jacomb would have shone indeed if he had succeeded in proving his case that a revolutionary change in the cost of reproduction did not affect the price of a commodity.

Jacomb expresses surprise that gold has price. Later on he says that an ounce of gold is coined into money expressed by the figure £3 17s. 10½d. In to-day's paper, December 14th, 1927, I see that gold is quoted at £4 4s. 11½d. per ounce. Then he proceeds to mix gold up with currency, and asks, "What, then, is the monetary expression of money?"; of course, that depends upon what the money is made of. The golden sovereign contains gold that actually contains, and is a concentrated embodiment of a large amount of human labour power. Silver and copper coins, say 20s. or 240 pence, do not contain anything like as much. Their relations in exchange are arbitrary, and outside of the countries in which they are in use, their value, which consists entirely of the metals of which they are composed, would be represented as such, unless they could be returned to the country of origin. Of course, it will be meaningless to Jacomb that gold is £4 4s. 11½d. per ounce, and that it is a bad price; for taking £3 17s. 10½d. as the pre-war price, it means about 8 per cent. rise, whereas, according to the Index figure, other commodities are up 65 per cent. on pre-war. As the various Governments do not appear to contemplate a return to a gold currency, its price may grow even relatively worse, which may account for the Americans dumping it back again.

Price is the monetary expression of exchange value, and there is no divine hand that determines that the monetary expression shall be gold. Look at Germany during the inflation period; prices equated to a printing press. It needed a mathematician with prophetic genius to know when to hold and when to part with goods—any old metal would have been preferable.

I have an idea that Governments have lost

their faith in gold; the fact that it is being hawked to-day at £4 4s. 11½d. makes it look fishy. According to the book, it should be a lot more per ounce. Apparently the most powerful monopoly, the gold interests, has been broken. The price, £3 17s. 10½d. per ounce, in pre-war days must either have left them a huge margin, else they have struck King Solomon's deposits, and maybe that in time gold will function in place of aluminium as cooking utensils.

Next he questions my statement that commerce could not operate by a transference of gold without half the population being engaged in gold extraction. I should have said an enormous number, not half; for I do not know exactly how much labour power is necessary to raise a ton of gold. Nevertheless, I had previously stated that the amount of gold held by the banks only fractionally covered the paper in circulation, and when you come to consider that currency is but the small change of commerce, just imagine what would transpire if every business transaction meant that the purchaser handed over to the vendor a gold equivalent; why, we should have gold going about on drays, else the price of gold would get so far away from its value that an ounce would buy a battleship and the Gold Interests would buy a few planets with the surplus value.

Really, my dear Jacomb, you do try one's patience when you ask such a ridiculous question, "What, then, is the golden equivalent of a hundred loaves of bread after they have passed into consumption?" and I feel that I am justified in saying that the golden equivalent of a hundred loaves of bread to-day must have considerably depreciated since the introduction of fixed nitrogen as a fertiliser. It would be difficult to get at the back of Rimington's mind if one accepted Jacomb's imputation of what I said in my criticism. Then he arrives at his greatest triumph, my slip in the inversion of the exchange rate of the Dollar to the £1, and after his ignorant guffaw, he impudently says that I said that their exchange rate had nothing to do with what they would buy in their respective countries. It is an assumption that these Governments will buy gold, but goods they are always ready to exchange for goods, provided that there is a margin and they keep a day to day tab on the exchange rate, i.e., how much goods the money will buy in each country. Some German firms actually quote to English

buyers in American dollars; they have not faith in a constant purchasing power of the currency of either countries, which is rather strange in view of the recent drop of the dollar to 4.88½. That is why I prefer to say that the value of currency is determined by whatever other commodities it will buy in its own country than gold. Its use value as currency has departed, and it appears to be an economic fifth wheel. Jacomb not only misquotes my criticism, but claims my arguments as his own, and then brazenly fastens his absurdities on me. He asks who is right; surely there are some S.P.G.B.'ers. capable of putting him out of his misery, but do not let him dodge away. Is he correct in his economic interpretation in his article, "Should we produce more?" (October, 27th, "S.S.") I contend he is utterly wrong.

Yours fraternally,

F. L. RIMINGTON.

#### OUR REPLY.

Mr. Rimington makes no attempt whatever to answer my questions: "What is the monetary expression of money?" and "How is the fall in the price of gold to which my critic refers expressed?" The nearest he gets to answering the first is to say that it "depends upon what the money is made of," and to follow with a rigmerole about silver and copper coins, which is quite beside the point, because, in this country, silver and copper coins are *not* money. Since this coinage does not contain value (past labour) corresponding to its face value, it cannot be the measure of value of other commodities, and, as Marx says ("Critique of Political Economy," p. 164), "a commodity thus becomes money only in its combined capacity of a measure of value and medium of circulation." In this country, then, money is gold; and now I will show the ridiculousness of my critic's position by quoting his own words. He said ("S.S.," December, 1927, p. 54): "price" is "merely an indication of the relative value of each commodity to the amount of gold contained in the £1 sterling." On this showing, then, the "price" Mr. Rimington quotes for an ounce of gold (£4 4s. 11½d.) "is merely an indication of the relative value of 'that' commodity to the amount of gold contained in the 'ounce of gold which is coined into £3 17s. 10½d.!" The two ounces of gold, then, are different.



One has more value in it than the other. Well, sovereigns are not particularly hard to get, and it is quite legal to melt them down. Mr. Rimington can make his fortune by melting them. When he has stripped his sovereigns of their uniforms, and converted them into plain ounces of gold, he can take those ounces of gold to the Bank of England, where he will get £3 17s. 9d. for them—a loss of 1½d. Or he can recover in full at the Mint, who pay £3 17s. 10½d., but in that case he will have to wait for his money. Mr. Rimington is still challenged to show how the fall in the price of gold which he claims has taken place can be expressed, and before he takes up the challenge, let him square his answer with his statement that price “is merely an indication of the relative value of each commodity to the amount of gold contained in the £1 sterling.”

Mr. Rimington's errors were so numerous and palpable in his first letter that I am afraid I missed the central idea of his attack, which was contained in the words, “goods exchange for goods . . . price was merely an indication of the relative value of each commodity to the amount of gold contained in the £1 sterling.” “Goods exchange for goods” — ye Gods! Mr. Rimington is himself so mixed that I offer no apology for not being able to disentangle his meaning from his inconsistencies at the first attempt. He is mystified by the market quotation, £4 4s. 11½d. per ounce, of gold and the mint “price,” £3 17s. 10½d., and can only think that the latter figures are mere reckoning figures, which have lost all touch with the actual value of gold. Only in this way can he arrive at the result that the writer was wrong when he stated that, if all producers doubled their output, prices would remain the same. Mr. Rimington sees in gold bullion something different to that which is represented by the £1 sterling. He loses sight of his own definition of price, quoted above, and imagines that gold produced at half the expenditure of labour-power is going to fall to half the “price” of gold sterling. In other words, the figures representing gold sterling are no longer what they pretend to be, and gold finds itself in fluctuating relations therewith. “Goods exchange for goods”! Gold is no longer in the picture! At one time it was £3 17s. 10½d. per ounce, but at present it is £4 4s. 11½d., and some day it may be, say, £1 10s. per ounce! How does this

agree with my critic's definition of price as “an indication of the relative value of each commodity to the amount of gold contained in the £1 sterling”? Mr. Rimington is in a terrible muddle, and all because he cannot realise that the ounce of gold, whatever its value, that is, whatever labour-time is necessary to its production, is still an ounce of gold, and exactly the weight of £3 17s. 10½d. in gold coin.

Surely I could not myself have found an illustration more shattering to Mr. Rimington's view than that supplied by himself when he says: “Look at Germany during the inflation period; prices equated to a printing press.” As a matter of fact, “prices equated” to the infinitesimal amount of gold behind the “printing press.” This in itself shows what becomes of prices when there is not a solid backing of gold behind its tokens.

I am sorry my critic is angry because I poked fun at his bloomer—though it was only six words. But doesn't his mistake show that he doesn't carefully read what he has written? And now I am accused of misquoting my opponent. Referring to myself, he writes, “He impudently says that I said that their exchange rate had nothing to do with what they would buy in their respective countries.” The statement Mr. Rimington says I attributed to him was my own statement, not his, and was clearly enough written for anyone to understand who has had the education my critic shows evidence of. But if he falsely says I misquoted him, I can show that he misquoted me, for he says that I try his patience when I ask “such a ridiculous question, ‘What, then, is the golden equivalent of a hundred loaves of bread when they have passed into consumption?’” My words were, “. . . what would become, will my critic tell us, of the golden equivalent of a hundred loaves of bread when the latter were consumed?” Quite a different question. These examples show that my critic not only is careless with regard to what he himself writes, but does not carefully read the replies of his opponents. To carry on a debate in such a manner is an abuse of the hospitality of these columns little short of disgusting. He need not fear that I wish to escape. If any of my statements are wrong, I know my duty to the Cause of Socialism too well to delay their retraction.

A. E. JACOMB.

## THE PASSING OF HARDY.

Primarily this journal is an organ of political propaganda. As such, any attempt to appraise the work of the late Thomas Hardy would be somewhat out of place. But there is one feature connected with his death which needs underlining and emphasising. We refer to the attitude of that old enemy of mankind, the Church. Here was a man who throughout most of a long and thoughtful life, had no use for the Church and its teaching whatever. Although at one time an orthodox Churchman, he has since confessed he found no happiness therein. As an artist in life, he truthfully portrayed the part played by the Church in rural conditions. He recognised its utility to certain primitive, immature minds. But, as a man, he had no need of it. He saw men and women as the puppets of circumstance. He saw life as a

“Chequerboard of Nights and Days  
Where Destiny with Men for Pieces plays.”  
And to Destiny he imputed an almost impish irony. Throughout his works, like a theme, there runs this thread of cynical frustration.

But it seems there are heights of irony of which even Hardy never dreamed. For hardly had he breathed his last, before the Church, whose teachings he had repulsed in life, claimed his corpse for her own. Apart from the fact that he was a known Agnostic, Hardy had specifically recorded in the opening sentence of his will, his desire to be buried with his own folk at Stinsford. No matter, he was a great man, too great for the Church to attempt to belittle, so they annexed him. There was a further difficulty: Hardy was known to have opposed cremation, and cremation is necessary before burial in the Abbey. The way out of that dilemma was easy. Ignore it. Hardy was dead anyway. What of his relatives, his friends? Yes! they were opposed to the old man's last wishes being trampled on. The *Daily News* correspondent interviewed his brother Henry, his sister Kate, and a cousin, Teresa Hardy. He records:—“They were all very emphatic in declaring their disappointment at Hardy being taken away from them. . . . Teresa Hardy, when I asked her if she did not appreciate the honour done to her cousin, said: ‘There is nothing in honour. He wanted to be buried in Stinsford Churchyard, and I think it is cruel not to do as he wished.’” Even the Mayor

of Dorchester, Mr. W. F. Hodges, said the proposed Abbey burial would leave a sore feeling in the town.

No matter! The Church must have its poppy-show. An ingenious expedient was suggested. As they could not have Hardy's body buried with his ancestors, the local Rector suggested they might have a piece of him, and it was hurriedly arranged that poor old Hardy's heart should be cut out and buried at Stinsford. As all the world knows, this was done. What Hardy would have thought of the whole proceeding, one can imagine. It is difficult to conceive anything more repulsive and disgusting, in an age which so constantly claims to be “enlightened,” and the comments of posterity should be worth reading. Sentiment still plays an important part in human affairs, and possibly will so continue for many years to come. But it is hard to imagine the sentimental majority of people viewing the barbaric mutilation of gentle old Hardy's body with any feelings other than loathing.

W. T. H.

## A MEETING

to commemorate

## The Commune of Paris

Will be held at

FRIARS HALL, 237 BLACKFRIARS RD.,

SUNDAY, 18th MARCH, at 7.30 p.m.

Doors open at 7 o'clock.

SPEAKERS—

J. FITZGERALD. A. KOHN.

E. LAKE, E. FAIRBROTHER.

ADMISSION FREE.

## THE 24th ANNUAL PARTY CONFERENCE

WILL BE HELD ON

Friday and Saturday, April 6th and 7th,

FAIRFAX HALL,

STANHOPE GARDENS, HARRINGAY, N.

Commence at 10 a.m.

Open to All.

THE ANNUAL PARTY RE-UNION will take place in the above Hall on Good Friday, April 6th, at 7.30 p.m. Doors open 7 p.m. Tickets from any Branch Secretary, or Head Office.



**OFFICIAL NOTICE.**

All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 17, Mount Pleasant, London, W.C.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

**TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTIONS.**

Twelve Months, post free... .. 2s. 6d.  
Six Months, post free .. .. 1s. 3d.

**The Socialist Standard,**

MARCH,



1928

**THE LIBERAL INDUSTRIAL FRAUD.**

The Report of the Liberal Party Industrial Enquiry has at last appeared, but it should be called "The Capitalists White-Washing Programme." From beginning to end it calls attention to bad conditions, but never once does it enquire into the cause. The remedy proposed is more of the conditions that caused the evils. More Capitalism. Empire Development of—Capitalism. More shareholders in—Capitalism. More Free Trade in goods—and labour power. Less taxes for the industrial lord. Cheaper coal. More roads, and similar pills for the Economic Earthquake.

The dependence of the working class upon the employers for a chance to work; the resulting exploitation and insecurity of work, together with actual unemployment all the time under Capitalism—this situation is not dealt with by these Liberal experts. All these quack doctors can suggest is the workers should buy shares where they work and get a share of the profits in large concerns, and when jobless they can work on the roads or in the forests—developing capital for the capitalists. They tell us that ownership is far too concentrated, and while they report thus, the Liberal capitalists, like their Tory friends, are busy amal-

gamating, centralising, combining and trustifying modern capital in more powerful concerns, whether like Sir Ernest Benn in the publishing world, or like the Brunners in the chemical industry.

The Labour Party are angry because the Liberals have pinched their policy and put it in the Liberal Report. The MacDonalds and Hendersons say the Report embraces much of Socialism, but any Socialist who looks into the Report to find the Socialism will wear his eyes out in vain. What the Labour leaders mean by Socialism is municipal trams and beer and such schemes, to run things by a Capitalist State when it pays better than ordinary capitalist ownership.

The Labour Party's programme is proved to be a capitalist one by its adoption by Liberals.

**WORLD DISARMAMENT!**

"Russia's Disarmament Proposals," by W. P. Coates, with preface by Arthur Ponsonby, M.P. Price 3d. The Anglo-Russian Parliamentary Committee.

This pamphlet is a report of Litvinov's speech at Geneva and the Russian Memorandum calling for complete disarmament. Litvinov's speech, however, shows the futility of expecting capitalism to disarm:

"The Soviet Government adheres to the opinion it has always held that under the capitalist system no grounds exist for counting upon the removal of the causes which give rise to armed conflicts. Militarism and big navies are the essentially natural consequences of the capitalist system."

Armies and navies for the suppression of the workers at home and aggression abroad will always be needed and used by the capitalists. To ask them to disarm is to spread the view that such a thing is possible under capitalism.

The praise of the Russian proposals by the *Daily Herald* and the Labour Party is a piece of pure impudence considering the record of the Labour Government in building cruisers and the Labour Party's support of the Great European Butchery. A. K.

**A SPEAKERS CLASS**

is conducted every Thursday evening at  
7.30 p.m. (sharp)  
at 17, Mount Pleasant.

**THE CLASS STRUGGLES IN FRANCE:  
BEFORE AND AFTER THE COMMUNE.**

By PAUL LAFARGUE.

**APPEARANCE OF THE WORKING CLASS ON  
THE POLITICAL STAGE.**

Although, prior to 1848, Socialism scattered into an endless number of variations of schools and schoolets, it could not, all in all, count many adherents. It did not gain a foothold among the masses of the workers and it enticed only a few artisans and bourgeois. Therefore there was no reason for the capitalist class to worry about that kind of Socialism; it regarded its adherents as queer specimens and harmless visionaries, which indeed they were. These adherents themselves contributed all that is humanly possible to appear as such and to be very grotesque. They wore garments of very peculiar cut—the St. Simonists buttoned their coats at the back so that they needed the aid of a comrade when dressing, and thus had their attention directed towards co-operation—excessively big hats, long beards, etc. So long as Louis Philippe ruled, the bourgeois political parties continued to struggle for ascendancy as though there were no Socialists in existence. But the June insurrection revealed to them the existence of a Socialism essentially different from that of the Utopians, of a Socialism that appeared to them as the most terrible of all monstrosities. The vicious and silly slanders spread by the entire press about the insurgents, the capitalists accepted as gospel. The newspapers declared that Communism and Socialism aimed at a division of goods. The capitalists believed that. For the individualist bourgeois, whose entire mental activities centre upon what he can pocket, a division of goods is the most horrible eventuality he can think of.

Prince Napoleon, who under Louis Philippe had played the role of a Communist reformer, now offered himself to the bourgeoisie to save society from Communism. The brand of Socialism which had not had sufficient comprehension to organise a political party and to instil into the workers a consciousness of their class interests, in the hands of a Bonapartist pretender became a political instrument wherewith to overthrow the republic, erect the empire and "protect

order, the family and property." The first appearance of Socialism on the political stage furnished weapons to the reactionary parties by means of which they retarded political development and suppressed the working class for the benefit of the capitalist class.

The first years of the empire brought an unparalleled prosperity traceable to the foundation of the "Credit Mobilier" (a credit bank for movable property), of the "Credit Foncier" (a credit bank for real property), and of other credit institutions of modern finance, to the building of railroads, the development of agriculture, etc. Due to this prosperity, the June insurrection and the terror it had carried into the ranks of the bourgeoisie were totally forgotten. Those who still remembered the insurrection regarded it as an extraordinary event caused by extraordinary conditions, a repetition of which they would never live to see. In a like manner Socialism was forgotten and not even spoken of. It was ranked among the whims gone out of fashion, like the National Guard, for which early in the government of Louis Philippe the bourgeoisie had greatly enthused itself.

But Napoleon III. did not forget that he owed his throne to the first political manifestation of the class struggle. When there came the years of commercial and industrial decline, when a series of bank crashes caused by the collapse of the "Credit Mobilier" ruined numerous existences in all layers of the bourgeoisie, then the republican party again raised its head and attacked the empire. It was then that Napoleon felt the time had come to re-kindle anew the class struggle between the proletariat and the capitalists. The working class and the capitalist class were mutually to rend each other, and the government, as a smirking bystander, was tranquilly to look on and make good use of the respite cleverly gained. Prompted by such considerations, Napoleon restored the right of assembly abolished at the time of his coup d'état, but limited it to meetings in which economic questions were to be considered. Every meeting dealing with political questions had to be dispersed.



by the police. These restrictions produced effects opposite to those aimed at. Napoleon raised politics to the position of forbidden fruit, which alone excited the ardent interest of the public. It remained apathetic, indifferent, toward the economic questions, which the Emperor wanted to put in the foreground of public interest in order to incite the workers against the capitalists and to conjure up before the eyes of the scared bourgeoisie the "red spectre" of Communism and of the division of goods.

The workers, who for fifteen years had heard no more of Socialism, did not even understand the meaning of the term, while the words republic, liberty, etc., smote their ears like a fanfare of trumpets. In order to cater to the passionate interest of their audiences, the speakers at the meetings did not open a fight against the employers and against capital, but interlarded their discourses with allusions to the Emperor and Empress and even with attacks upon both. Instead of picturing the misery of economic exploitation and the allurements and advantages of collective property, they indulged in romantic lamentations about the shame of political oppression, about the happiness of liberty, the greatness of the republic and of the revolution. So that quiet might return to the political waters, Napoleon was prompted again to prohibit public meetings. But it was then too late—the stone had begun to roll.

For the first time since the Great Revolution of the past century—if one disregards the June insurrection and the revolt of Lyon in 1831—a real popular movement swept through the land. Until then only the various layers of the propertied classes had participated in the political struggles. Now, however, it was the workers who got into motion, who assailed the imperial government and fought for the republic. The working class appeared on the stage of political struggles and made common cause with the republican faction of the bourgeoisie. And therewith it obeyed unconsciously, following the logic of events, the slogan Marx and Engels had given to the proletariat in 1847 in the "Communist Manifesto," namely, "everywhere to support every revolutionary movement against the existing social and political conditions." This first political manifestation of the working class showed how untenable had been the anti-political tactics of the Socialists prior to

1848. This attitude, forced upon the proletariat by existing conditions, confirmed the capitalists in the opinion that there were no longer any classes. They were full of the sweet illusion that the workers, in the present as in the past, as well as forever after, would see in the propertied their "natural" leaders and, forgetting about their own class interests, would render to the bourgeoisie dray-horse service in the maintenance of its interests. So far from opposing the foundation of the International, the bourgeois republicans joined it hoping that it could be made to serve them. Like Mazzini, they, too, sought in the International a weapon against the empire. And, indeed, it proved to be such a weapon. While Jules Favre and the leaders of the republican party flirted with the government and accepted its favours, the members of the Paris section of the International proudly and contemptuously rejected the offers of Rouher, the vice emperor. They understood that, first of all and at any price, there must be a change in the political situation, that the empire must be overthrown and the republic restored so that Socialism could develop and gain a foothold among the working class.

But at that, the Socialism that could then be offered to the workers by no means was such as to satisfy them and meet their requirements. It confronted them as "mutualism," as the Socialism of the artisans and petty industrialists, built up and extended by Proudhon through his own anarchistic and reactionary theories. It was he who, in the name of liberty, had publicly championed the secular power of the Pope; and he had also defended the right of the American Southern States to abandon the Union in order to maintain slavery. The members of the Paris section of the International who, barring a few exceptions such as Varlin and Malon, were Proudhonist "Mutualists," at the congresses of the International were conspicuous by their reactionary and arrogant attitude. Tolain, Limousin, Chemale and the other Proudhonists entertained the strange assumption that they were to lead the International and force upon it their ideas, although they could not even lay claim to being clear upon its purpose. They always voted with the minority against all Communist motions. The fall of the empire surprised the working class before it had been able to attain a firm organisation or rise to a clear Socialist con-

ception. It strove for nothing but the restoration of the republic. The few workers and artisans forced into the foreground by the political agitation of the later years, also possessed no Socialist convictions. Thus, in 1870, the bourgeois republicans calmly took the place of the Bonapartists, just as in 1848 they had crowded the Orleanists out of power. The workers, even the members of the International, took this to be the natural course of events. On September 4th, 1870, there was in France but one single class politically active, the capitalist class.

It was the Paris Commune of March, 1871, which, though not a Socialist revolution, was a grand repetition of the June insurrection, and made clear to the perception the class struggle latent in the lap of capitalist society. Versailles, where had gathered the representatives of all political parties whom the prevailing conditions had closely welded together, Versailles became the embodiment of capitalist interests. The Paris of the Commune, on the other hand, was the advance guard of the proletariat. For the second time the modern class struggle in its most pronounced and most terrible form, entered the arena of political life. The rising of the proletariat in 1848 resembled a bolt of lightning out of the blue sky, ominously lighting up the horizon and then striking earthward without leaving a trace. Under the Second Empire the June insurgents as well as the Socialism of Fourier and St. Simon had been forgotten. The Commune, however, although only an insurrection of the Parisians, shook up the entire nation and awakened in the minds of the workers the conviction that under the walls of Paris the struggle went on for their very own cause. For the first time it came about that the workers experienced this emotion, and it was destined to become an indelible one. The subsequent economic events could only deepen it and prepare the workers to become conscious of their interests as a class, and would cause them to come together as a class in a political party.

#### THE ORGANISATION OF THE WORKING CLASS AS A POLITICAL PARTY.

The Franco-German war of 1870-71 led to a revolution of the economic conditions of France. The large machine industry, which since the trade agreement with England in 1863 had been slowly developed, suddenly took on a colossal upward swing. French industry had then to meet a severe task; it had to heal the wounds which the

war had inflicted upon one-third of the country; it had to furnish the means for the gigantic armaments, the colossal building-up of militarism; and, finally, it had to fill the gap caused by the cession of Alsace-Lorraine, the province of France most highly developed industrially before the year 1870. French industry met these demands in the course of a few years. In all parts of the country factories shot up like toadstools, destroyed petty industry and created an industrial proletariat, which until then had been present only in a few cities of the north-east, the only part of the country where large machine industry had got a firm foothold. Ten years after the war the industrial proletariat could be found all over France.

If the June insurrection had buried Utopian Socialism, the Commune had given the *coup de grace* to the Proudhon "mutualism." The Fourierists and St. Simonists had been transformed into manipulators of great industrial and financial undertakings, while the mutualists landed in the Senate, as did Tolain, or in worse places, as did Chardey, Fribourg, Pierre Denis. A few attached themselves to the new Socialist movement.

The International, during its short life, had fulfilled an important mission the fruits of which were now to be harvested. The imagination of the scared bourgeoisie pictured the International as a powerful, gigantic organisation, firmly organised, able to dispose of millions who, blindly and without remonstrance, would obey the London General Council, which latter ordered strikes and prepared insurrections like that of the Paris Commune. Nothing can be more beside the facts than this conception. The International did not play this role, could not have played it. But even if the mission it actually did fulfil was less romantic, it was none the less great and important. It had the mission to bring nearer to one another and into communication the workers of Europe and America, who had until then been separated by political boundaries and national hatreds and prejudices; it had the mission to formulate Socialist theories which, so to speak, became the Socialist confession of faith of the world proletariat; it had the mission to create, in theory, an international Socialist movement at a time when there existed in no country, Germany alone excepted, a national Social-



ist movement. Only a revolutionary and scientific genius like Marx could have conceived the thought of such a work, could prevent the International from being led into wrong channels and, instead, perform the task that had been set in so short a time. When the International, which in reality had died after the congress at The Hague in 1872, a few years thereafter entirely disappeared there existed in the world an international Socialist Party the members of which had the mission to found in their home countries national Socialist parties.

The men who in France, after the fury of the Versailles reaction had somewhat subsided, took up the Socialist movement at the point where the Commune had left off, had been members of the International. They had, therefore, drawn their new Socialist convictions from the common fund of Socialist theories which the International had formulated at its various congresses. Ten years after the fall of the Commune, the congress held at Marseilles, attended by representatives of the working class from all parts of France, decided against a strong minority to organise the workers as a class party, which was to participate in economic conflicts through the support of strikes and in the political struggle utilise the ballot to conquer the powers of state and by means of them transfer the land and the means of production into the possession of the entire nation. Therewith the Socialist Party had found its proper field of action, had raised its standard, and now it remained only to draw together its forces and to organise them. This task was taken in hand eagerly and with enthusiasm.

(From the *Weekly People*.)

#### WOOLWICH DISTRICT.

### LECTURES

at Lakedale Hall, Lakedale Road,  
PLUMSTEAD.

SUNDAY, MARCH 4th, at 7.30 p.m.

"SOCIALISM & DIRECT ACTION."

Speaker - - S. CASH.

SUNDAY, MARCH 11th, at 7.30 p.m.,

A LECTURE ON "SOCIALISM."

Admission Free. Questions and Discussion.

### SOCIALISM OR CHINESE NATIONALISM.

#### A CRITICISM FROM AUSTRALIA.

In the March, 1927, issue appeared an article under the title "Socialism or Chinese Nationalism." In it was set out the Socialist attitude towards the plea of the patriot that all citizens ought to defend the independence of the country in which they live. Our answer—the answer we gave in 1914—is plain and definite. Under capitalism all the workers in every land are wage slaves. They have, under capitalism, no means as a class of escaping from wage slavery. Victory or defeat, in wars between capitalist nations, each leaves their position in society unchanged. Even the standard of living of the workers in both the "victorious" and "defeated" countries has altered little or not at all since 1914. The abolition of capitalism and the establishment of Socialism is the only first-class issue for the Socialist. The enemy of the working class is the capitalist class.

Therefore to urge the workers to fight for Irish, or Indian, or Chinese, or English, or German national independence, is to ask them to neglect the problems and the interests of their class. Such propaganda under capitalism, on whatever pretext, is anti-Socialist.

The Communists, like other reformist organisations, urge the workers on various tactical pleas to take this anti-Socialist course of action. The Irish workers, having been told to fight for Sinn Fein, are now told to support their equally capitalist opponents in De Valera's party. German workers were urged to resist the French occupation of the Ruhr. Communists in Alsace are now agitating for independence. Indians and Chinese workers are told by the Communists to support first one and then another of the various capitalist nationalist parties in the respective countries.

The Australian Communist journal, *The Workers' Weekly* (Sydney, 15th July, 1927), angrily attacks the attitude of the Socialist Party. They are angry first of all because the article in question referred to a "possible war in China." This, says *The Workers' Weekly*, is "opportunism" and is "traitorous," because in fact hostile acts were being committed even if war had not openly been declared. The criticism is pointless and childish. Our attitude is the same whether hostilities are veiled or open;

we tell the English workers and the Chinese workers that the attack and the resistance to attack are alike not deserving of the support of the working class.

In comparison with the loss of working class life and limb in war the difference between exploitation by Chinese capitalists and exploitation by foreign capitalists matters nothing at all to the Chinese workers. (The Kuomintang Party estimates that already 100,000 lives have been lost in the Chinese wars of the past year or two, in the Nationalist Army alone.)

*The Workers' Weekly* goes on to state the hypothesis of a bombardment of Southampton, Liverpool and London, and asks whether we would refer to that as a "possible war on England." Our critic forgets the fact that during the war 1914—1918 we did consistently maintain the attitude we now place before the Chinese workers, the attitude of unqualified hostility to capitalist wars. (It would, incidentally, be interesting to know if our critics can offer as consistent a record.)

We are branded as "henchmen" of our "Imperialist masters" because we tell the workers that rule by one section of the capitalist class does not differ in essentials from rule by another section. We are asked to enthuse over the "aspirations of subject peoples such as India, Egypt or China." Instead we tell the truth, which is that Indian or Chinese "independence" matters no more to the workers there than does English "independence" matter to us. They are all capitalist movements. Just as we told the English workers in 1914 not to support the war against Germany, so we tell the Chinese workers now. Perhaps our critic will enlighten us by explaining what the Chinese workers stand to gain by defending Chinese capitalism against European capitalist Governments, and what the English workers stood to gain in 1914 by defending English capitalism against Germany.

*The Workers' Weekly* repeats the familiar Communist arguments about supporting nationalist capitalist movements for tactical reasons.

The national movement should be supported, they say, "not as an end in itself, but for the weakening of the might of the Imperialist State, the getting of our propaganda to the broad masses, the gaining of

their confidence, their acceptance of our leadership, the pre-requisites for the Social Revolution."

China is an excellent example of the suicidal nature of that policy. Capitalism as a world system is not weakened but strengthened by the emergence of new and powerful independent or semi-independent capitalist nations like Ireland, China, India, Egypt, etc.

The entry of Communists into nationalist parties like the Kuomintang in China did not aid Communist propaganda. Communist propaganda was in the first place inevitably subordinated, as it was in Ireland, to nationalist propaganda in the interests of the so-called "national crisis." And as soon as the various Chinese nationalist leaders, whom the Communists supported in turn, had no further use for their Communist supporters, they got rid of them by execution and other means. Literally thousands of lives of politically active Chinese workers were needlessly sacrificed in this way.

In fact the Communists in China have not succeeded in winning the confidence of the masses, or in getting positions of leadership, but if they had it would not materially help Communism. Teaching Chinese workers that the "national independence" is a working class issue is not Communist propaganda. Winning positions of power and eminence as Chinese patriots, or Irish or English or German patriots, is playing the capitalist game. It is not destroying but building up the dangerous illusions of patriotism. For the Russians it may well prove an exceptionally dangerous double-edged weapon. China is rapidly moving towards the position of an independent capitalist republic, and it may very well be that the Chinese nationalism fostered for "tactical" reasons by Russian Communists will provide the screen behind which the Chinese capitalists will prepare to enforce their class interests should these conflict with Russian territorial and other claims.

In conclusion, let us remind the Communist Party of Australia that the Socialist Party of Great Britain can boast that it has never urged the workers to fight in or prepare for capitalist wars, and has never, directly or indirectly, aided any party doing so. The Communist Party of Australia, on the other hand, actively supports the Aus-



tralian Labour Party, which is notorious for its support of the last war and for its present "big navy" and air force programme. H.

### DONATIONS TO NEW PUBLICATION FUND.

	£	s.	d.
Tooting	0	1	3
B. D. F. G.	0	1	0
N.A.F.T. Association	0	10	0
F. Smith	0	2	6
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H. M.	0	10	0
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Already acknowledged	147	11	10½
Total received to date 31/12/27	155	8	6½
Amount expended on Pamphlets	153	9	10½
Balance 31/1/27	£1	18	8

Contributions to this fund are earnestly invited to assist us with the expense of publishing more literature.

### THE PLIGHT OF THE COTTON WORKERS.

Lancashire's staple industry, the manufacture of cotton goods, has for some years felt the effects of Indian and Japanese competition in markets once their own. Taking "1913" as the pre-war basis, Lancashire's total post-war production per year, of cotton piece goods, has never reached two-thirds of the pre-war figure. Lancashire has lost, in bulk, one-third of its export trade since 1913. The usual effects of this loss of trade have taken place. Millowners have become bankrupt and mills have been mortgaged to the banks.

Meanwhile the cotton workers have suffered successive decreases in wages, "short time," and existed mainly on unemployment pay and outdoor relief. A century ago, Lancashire, with its advanced methods of production, could easily compete with other countries that were then backward, socially and economically. Now these countries have advanced into the capitalist economy, and are using modern methods of production, using textile machinery which Lancashire has exported, to compete with Lancashire.

Japan, India and China, by the aid of the low standard of life of the workers and the longer hours of work, are enabling the capitalists of those countries to undersell Lancashire in the marketing of cotton piece goods.

The conditions experienced by the Lancashire workers during the 19th century are now being undergone by the workers of Japan, India and China.

In the *Manchester Guardian* of November 13th, 1926, appeared the statement that "The Japanese mills are mostly worked by women and girls, who enlist—'enlist' is the most appropriate word—for three years, are housed in places like barracks for that period, and have to work ten hours a day—half of them on night shifts—for low wages." Even this appears favourable when compared with the conditions at one time endured by the English cotton worker. J. L. & B. Hammond, in their work "The Town Labourer," p. 22, state "That the normal working day in Manchester and neighbourhood in 1825 varied from twelve and a half to fourteen hours and mills, like mines, sometimes worked night and day." Children of seven and upwards were sent by various parish authorities to work in the

mills. Describing the conditions endured by these children the "Hammonds" state (p. 145) that "Next door to the mills prentice-houses were built, and in these two buildings their young lives were spent, at best in monotonous toil, at worst in a hell of human cruelty. If their masters failed in business their labours ceased and they were cast adrift into the world. A model mill at Styal, near Manchester, employed from seventy to eighty children procured from the Liverpool Workhouse, living in a small prentice-house near the mill. Here, where kindness was the rule, and the children's education was supervised by members of the owner's family noted for its benevolence, the working hours were seventy-four a week, or over twelve a day, Saturday included."

At any rate the cotton masters have nothing to learn from the Asiatic in regard to industrial exploitation. Recently the Master Cotton Spinners' Association opened negotiations with the operatives on the proposal to lengthen the normal working week of 48 hours to 52½. The fact that the operatives are working short time, owing to the inability of the employers to sell the commodities that could be produced in a 48-hour week does not appear to bother the reasoning capacity of the cotton masters. The cotton workers are badly organised, and it is doubtful if they can put up much of a struggle against the continual lowering of their standard of life. The workers in the cotton industry have toiled to produce wealth for their masters' benefit. What in return does the capitalist system offer them? Only worse conditions, if such are possible. The plight of the cotton workers is only an example of the general conditions of the working class in this social system. The Socialist Party of Great Britain claim that the reason the working class are unable to obtain a decent standard of life is that the wealth the workers produce is owned by the employing class.

The capitalists own the means of wealth production, land, factories, machinery, means of transportation, etc., and allow the workers to produce further wealth and give them in return just sufficient of the necessities of life to keep them alive to produce more wealth. The masters will only allow the workers to use the means of production when they can sell the commodities the workers produce at a profit.

If the capitalist cannot sell these commodities they close the factories. The

workers are then unable to sell their working power, and unless they can obtain relief from charity or insurance, they are forced to go without the necessities of life.

If the working class could obtain access to the means of wealth production, they could produce more than sufficient to keep every member of the community in comfort. The working class by supporting Socialism would obtain control of the political machinery and use it to take the means of wealth production from the present owners. The community would then have the means to give every person the full benefit of the enormous amount of wealth that is produced by modern methods of production. H. A.

### PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION FUND.

It is considered that the time has now arrived for the Socialist Party to contest Parliamentary elections by putting forward Socialist candidates in opposition to the various capitalist and alleged Labour Parties. In view of our limited resources and the heavy initial cost of the deposit (£150), our action in this direction is dependent on the amount of financial support forthcoming from sympathisers. Donations are therefore invited to our Election Fund. Sympathisers are particularly urged not to diminish their customary donations to our general funds in order to contribute to the new fund. Donations will be acknowledged in these columns.

### LEYTON LECTURE

SUNDAY MARCH 11th,

Trades and Labour Hall, Grove House High Road, Leyton, E.10.

SPEAKER: COMRADE McHAFFIE.

SUBJECT:

"ASPECTS OF SOCIALISM."

Doors open 7.15 p.m. Commence 7.45 p.m.  
Admission Free. Questions and Discussion.

### S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS

LONDON DISTRICT.

**Sundays** Highbury Corner, 11.15 a.m.  
Clapham Common, 3 p.m.  
Victoria Park, 4 p.m.  
Tottenham, West Green Corner, 11.30 a.m.  
Paddington, Prince of Wales, 11.30 a.m.  
Bethnal Green, opposite Salmon and Ball, 7.30 p.m.

**Mondays** Paddington, Prince of Wales, 8 p.m.  
Becontree, Burnside Road, and Green Lanes, 8 p.m.

**Wednesdays** Hackney, Paragon Rd. and Mare St. 8 p.m.

**Fridays** Clerkenwell, Almeida St., Upper St., N., 8 p.m.  
West Ham, Water Lane 8 p.m.  
Leyton, James Lane, High Road, 8 p.m.

HANLEY BRANCH MEETINGS.

**Sundays** Hanley, Market Square, 7 p.m.  
Burslem, St. John's Square, 7 p.m.



**BRANCH DIRECTORY.**

**BATTERSEA.**—Sec., 2, Hanbury-road, S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns-road. Discussion second Thurs. in month.

**BECNTREE.**—Sec., S. Cash, 32, Greenway. Public invited.

**BETHNAL GREEN.**—Branch meets Mondays, 8 p.m., at 2, Co-operative Buildings, 361, Bethnal Green-rd., E.2. Sec., D. Jacobs, at above address.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec. E. Jesper, 38, Rollason-rd., Erdington. Branch meets The Continental Café, Moor St., 1st and 3rd Sundays at 11 a.m.

**CAMBERWELL.**—Sec., J. Goodfellow, 40, Solon New Road, Clapham, S.W.4. Branch meets at Camberwell Trades Council Room, 6A, Artichoke Place, Camberwell Green, every Friday at 8 p.m. Discussions—public invited.

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

**CLERKENWELL.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at 17, Mount Pleasant, W.C.1. Discussions first Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.—all invited. Sec., at above address.

**EAST LONDON.**—Sec., A. Jacobs, 78 Eric-st., Mile-end, E.3. Branch meets first and third Mondays in month at above address.

**EAST HAM.**—Branch meets at 1, Tyrone-road, East Ham. Wednesdays at 8 p.m. Communications. Sec. at above address.

**EDINBURGH.**—Sec., 15, Barclay-place, Edinburgh.

**HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Mondays, 8 p.m. at The Old Gravel Pit Hall, Mare-street, Hackney. Branch Business 1st and 3rd Mondays. Discussions 2nd and 4th Mondays. Sec. at above address.

**HANLEY.**—Branch meets Tuesdays, Working Men's Club, Glass-st. Sec., C. Cook, 64, Sidney St.

**HULL.**—Branch meetings, Tuesday, at 8 p.m., at the Trade and Labour Club (Jarratt-street entrance). Discussion after meeting. All readers in Hull requested to attend.

**ISLINGTON.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 144, Seven Sister-rd., Holloway, N. Sec., M. Baker, 18, Orpingley-rd., N.7.

**LEYTON.**—Sec., A. Holland, 396, Lea Bridge-rd., Leyton. Branch meets 8 p.m., Trades and Labour Hall, Grove House, High-rd., every Monday. Public invited.

**MANCHESTER.**—Sec., W. Addison, 111, West Park-street, Salford, Manchester.—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month, 7.45 p.m. at 114, Duke St., Stretford-road.

**PADDINGTON.**—Branch meeting held on 2nd and 4th Fridays, 8 p.m., in room above the Co-operative Stores, 306, Kilburn-lane, W.9 (side door).

**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Sec., J. Bird, 5 Wellington-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.

**TOOTING.**—Sec., 15, University-road, Collier's Wood, S.W. 19. Branch meets every Friday at 8 p.m. at Tooting Adult School, 971, Garratt-lane, S.W. 17.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Secretary 22, Dunloe-ave., N.15. Branch meets Fridays, Room 2, Trades Hall, 7, Bruce Grove. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.

**WALTHAMSTOW.**—Sec., S. E. Williams, 3, Dyson-rd., Leytonstone, E.11. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.

**WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107 Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at Secretary's address.

**WEST HAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford rd., Stratford. Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

**WOOD GREEN.**—All communications to Sec., F. W. Godfrey, 71, Falkland Road, N.8.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interests of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great HOLDS— Britain

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office,



# THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

No. 284. Vol. 24.]

LONDON, APRIL, 1928.

[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.

## SHOULD THE WORKERS FIGHT FOR RUSSIA?

Before the Great War there were many workers in this and other countries who would have agreed without a moment's hesitation that a working class movement should not support a capitalist war, and who, again without hesitation, rushed into the war when it came. This war, they said, was "different"; this was a "defensive" war; the workers must defend their homes, their wives, their liberties.

Since 1918 the vague sentiment against war has grown up again, and we are asked to put our trust in the illusory determination of the organised trade unionists to stop another outbreak. But those non-socialists who are most emphatic in their refusal to support another capitalist war are frequently to be heard expressing their willingness to fight for Russia, and their approval of the Russian military preparations. Thus the *Sunday Worker* (February 19th), shows a picture of a handsome Russian soldier in full fighting equipment, and under it the words: "Soviet worker in the Red Army ready to defend the factories and land of his class."

### **CAPITALISM THE ENEMY.**

We tell the workers of each capitalist nation that support for capitalist wars, offensive or defensive, is not in accordance with working class interests, for the simple reason that "their" country does not in fact belong to them but to the capitalist class. The factories and land of England do not belong to the workers but to their masters, and the same is true of Germany, America and other countries. What the workers have not got they cannot lose. What then does it matter to them if "their" country, which isn't theirs at all, is taken away from the English section of

the capitalist class by another section? Win or lose, the workers are still workers, and the kindly interest taken in them by English capitalists is precisely the same in kind as that of American, German, or any other exploiters, i.e., the desire to make a profit out of them.

### **CAPITALISM IN RUSSIA.**

So far the members and followers of the Communist Party in this country would doubtless signify their agreement. But the next step in the argument is to consider whether Russian workers are in an essentially different position. Do the factories and land in Russia really belong to the Russian working class, and if not why should they defend interests which are not their own, but those of another class?

Let us first take the land. In theory the land of Russia belongs to the State, as in this country all land is in theory held from the Crown; in fact the land belongs in Russia to the peasants as it belongs here to the landowners. Issuing decrees declaring that the land has been socialised is of no significance whatever except as an evidence of good intentions. The Soviet Government has not the machinery to carry out such decrees, nor the power to enforce them. The consent of the peasants is unobtained and unobtainable, and the Government never did in fact seriously regard such a step as practical politics. No Russian Government would survive for a month if it endeavoured to dispossess the peasants of their land. They were the makers of the "revolution" and they would crush any Government which openly opposed their interests. Their seizure of the land preceded the Bolshevik coup d'état and they will resist fiercely any



change from Monarchists to go back or from Communists to go forward.

#### PRIVATE PROPERTY IN LAND.

Mr. Arthur Ransome (Manchester Guardian, 2nd March) quotes from Pravda an article on this question in which it is shown from official records that whereas there were at the end of the Civil War between 15 and 16 million separate peasant holdings there are now 25 million. Peasant proprietorship is growing, not declining.

There are, it is true, some Soviet Government model farms run on up-to-date industrial lines and intended to undermine the barbaric individualism of the peasants and their methods of cultivation. As a means of raising the standard of cultivation they have had some success, but as the basis of social ownership of the land and a socially organised agriculture they are negligible. Out of a rural population of some 116,000,000 (see Statesman's Year Book, page 1227) only "about 500,000 workers, of whom 45 per cent. are permanent workers, are employed in the Soviet farms and their dependent enterprises." (See Weekly Bulletin of the Anglo-Russian Parliamentary Committee, 23rd February 1928). That is to say that less than one-half of one per cent. of the rural population are employed on these model farms. The value of the output of the State Agricultural Syndicate and the Sugar Trust is only 5.5 per cent. of the gross agricultural output in 1926-27. (See above Bulletin.)

The land in Russia belongs not to the working class but to the peasants. It is privately owned and controlled by them and cultivated on an individualistic basis for private profit. The Russian working class have no more direct interest in the defence of peasant proprietorship, than have the French workers in the defence of peasant proprietorship in France. Peasant proprietorship is economically backward and socially reactionary. As sellers of farm products, as purchasers of manufactured goods, as employers of wage earners or exploiters of the unpaid labour of their wives and children, and finally as owners of land, the interests of the peasants are in direct conflict with those of the working class and are directly opposed to the movement towards socialism. The Russian workers emphatically do not possess the land of Russia. Why then should they fight to defend what is not theirs?

#### WHO OWNS THE FACTORIES?

Now let us consider the factories. Do the Russian workers own the Russian factories and workshops, railways and steamships, and industrial capital in general? The answer is plainly No! The Russian workers are wage-earners as in this country. Some are employed by Russian and foreign private capitalist undertakings, frankly carried on for profit. Others, as in our Post Office, are employed in State capitalist concerns, their general conditions of labour being governed as here by the general standard of living of the workers and by the need of the Government to pay interest on borrowed capital and foreign credits, and to run the concerns at a profit on ordinary commercial lines. It has even happened that wages in the Russian State concerns have been lower than in outside industry. This, however, is due to special circumstances and is hardly likely to be more than temporary. It has been explained in Russian official quarters as being due to the willingness of State employees to take lower wages in order to build up capital reserves for the expansion of State industry. Workers in private concerns have, on the other hand, been directly encouraged to stand out for higher wages among other reasons for the purpose of crippling their accumulation of reserves.

#### NO PROFITS WITHOUT EXPLOITATION.

Profit and interest only come from the exploitation of wage labour, and capitalism in Russia is no exception. That is not to question the sincerity or good intentions of the Bolshevik administrators of Russian capitalism. But whatever their intentions may be there is in essentials only one way of administering capitalism, that is in the capitalist way. The policy of the Soviet Government is dominated by the solid resistance of the peasants to any attempt at socialisation, by the need to produce manufactured goods cheaply and by the necessity of paying for the capital which they must borrow at home or abroad.

The peasants already complain of the fact that they are compelled to buy home produced manufactures at prices well above those ruling abroad. As their knowledge increases so they will press more and more strongly for the destruction of the State control of foreign trade, for the right to sell their products in the dearest market and the right to buy manufactures in the cheapest

market. To meet this the rulers of Russia will in turn be compelled to introduce all the modern capitalist methods of speeding up in the endeavour to make their employees produce goods cheaply enough to compete with goods produced in Germany, England and elsewhere. The Russian workers are wage-earners like any others, living under capitalist economic conditions and exploited like any other wage-earners.

The issue of the *Sunday Worker* from which we quoted above gives very pointed evidence of this.

#### THE SHARE PUSHERS.

Under the heading "Big Chance for Investors," it spreads the glad tidings that a Russian Government Railway Loan for £6,000,000 has been placed on the English market, offering a total actual return of over 11 per cent. The *Sunday Worker* says: "High yielding loans are usually not available for public subscription, especially with the security this offers. The profits on the railways last year would cover the loan four times." Here we have our old familiar enemy capitalism in all its nakedness. The Russian workers have no more interest in defending Russian capitalism than we have in defending English capitalism.

But, we are told, surely the control of the Russian Government by the Bolsheviks makes a difference; as also the numerous and important improvements in wages and conditions of labour which have been introduced. Should the Russian workers not be willing to fight in defence of these gains?

#### THE PROGRESS OF CAPITALISM.

Let us clear the air by stating one or two facts. First, it is evident from the more reliable accounts that the condition of the Russian workers is better than before the war, as measured by the amount of real wages. Second, it can readily be admitted that the "sympathetic" and enlightened administration of the capitalist system can bring certain definite but limited gains to the workers. For example, it is plainly better for the workers to be protected by Factory Acts than not to be protected, and probably better to be scientifically exploited by a Ford or a Cadbury than to be brutally and unscientifically sweated by some unintelligent early Victorian who has not realised that it pays to have healthy and contented workers. But while this may be admitted to be true that is no sufficient

cause for the workers to sacrifice their lives. In the first place, the difference of degree is small and certainly not worth fighting about, and more importantly, the workers will not lose these small advantages by any action or inaction of theirs, because the motive is not at all the welfare of the workers. The changes in methods of exploitation are due to the development of capitalist industry itself. It is not kindness but necessity which compels the factory owner to raise the standard of living of the coolie when he takes him from his field work and introduces him into the more exhausting factory system. Russia, whether ruled by Bolsheviks or as an adjunct of a British-American Banking trust, cannot compete with foreign highly developed capitalist industry unless it gives its wage-slaves approximately the same physical standards and inducements to work. Carrying the argument to its logical extreme, the conquest of Russia by America, might result in the Russians being forced to accept the American more developed system of intensified exploitation based on the payment of those higher wages of which we hear so much.

#### A PEASANT GOVERNMENT?

There is of course the possibility that the Russian Government might come to be controlled by a peasant party, openly hostile to and ignorant of capitalist industry and its needs. (This is in Trotsky's view the present tendency.) Should that happen capitalist industry and incidentally the care of the workers as profit-producing agents, would be neglected. This is no doubt the reason why Factory legislation, health and unemployment insurance, etc., are so backward in France with its largely peasant dominated parliament, as compared with Germany. But that danger in Russia would point to the need of the workers endeavouring to protect themselves against the encroachments both of the peasants and of the capitalist class and not to the fatal policy of lining-up under the national flag in the pathetic belief that they have an interest in defending their "country." Their country, like our "motherland" and the German "fatherland," belongs not to them but to classes with interests opposed to those of the working class. The chief enemy of the working class is the capitalist class and the task of the Socialist is to overthrow the capitalist system in Russia as elsewhere.



In conclusion, it may be as well to point out that this is in no sense a condemnation of the Bolshevik seizure of power in 1917. Our criticism was and is that they claimed to be able to achieve the impossible. Certain definite tasks lay before them and have been achieved. They brought Russia out of the war, exposed the purely capitalist nature of the conflict to the workers in both camps, and hastened the building of capitalism in Russia at a time when there was no other party with sufficient experience or determination to tackle so great an administrative work. They cannot, however, by legislation solve the fundamental conflicts between contending classes in Russia. They cannot permanently make the working class content with the capitalist economic system, and it would be better that they should recognise before it is too late that if they remain in office the discontent of the workers will come to be directed against them. H.

#### PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION FUND.

It is considered that the time has now arrived for the Socialist Party to contest Parliamentary elections by putting forward Socialist candidates in opposition to the various capitalist and alleged Labour Parties. In view of our limited resources and the heavy initial cost of the deposit (£150), our action in this direction is dependent on the amount of financial support forthcoming from sympathisers. Donations are therefore invited to our Election Fund. Sympathisers are particularly urged not to diminish their customary donations to our general funds in order to contribute to the new fund. Donations will be acknowledged in these columns.

#### BE SURE TO READ IN OUR MAY ISSUE.

The Reviews of two recent books:—  
"Lenin's Materialism and Empirico-Criticism."

"History of the First International."

Both Published by Martin Lawrence, at 12s. 6d. each.

#### A SPEAKERS CLASS

is conducted every Friday evening at  
7.30 p.m. (sharp)  
at 17, Mount Pleasant.

#### DISHONEST I.L.P. JOURNALISM.

Elsewhere in this issue appears a review of "A History of English Socialism," written by G. Benson, and published by the *New Leader*, Ltd. The book in question contains the untrue statement that our organisation assisted in the formation of the Communist Party of Great Britain.

The book was reviewed in the *New Leader* on December 9th, 1927, and the reviewer laid special stress on the "direct honesty of statement" and the "proof of wide reading and hard-earned knowledge" possessed by the author, Mr. G. Benson. When we called attention to the incorrect and damaging statement about ourselves we were definitely promised by the Acting Editor of the *New Leader* that a correction would be published in the *New Leader*. This promise was made in writing in a letter dated 18th January, 1928, but the following week the General Manager of the *New Leader* wrote refusing to insert the correction on the flimsy pretence that the matter "has nothing to do with the *New Leader* as an organ, but concerns the *New Leader*, Ltd., its controlling company." Then on February 2nd, two months after the publication of the book and the review in the *New Leader*, the General Manager, a Mr. L. A. Plummer, informed us that a correction slip containing the bare statement that "The words and 'and the Socialist Party of Great Britain' are here inserted in error," would be sent out with copies sold in the future.

We naturally protested that large numbers of copies were already in circulation and it was not unreasonable to ask that the *New Leader*, which had strongly urged the value of the book to its readers, should take the step it had promised and publish a correction. The attempted distinction between the *New Leader* and the *New Leader*, Ltd., is in keeping with the I.L.P.'s past record of subtle propaganda methods; are we to understand from this that the I.L.P. has in fact no control over the proprietors of what purports to be its own official organ?

Members of the I.L.P. will, we trust, notice the fact that whereas our columns, like our platform and our meetings, are open to all our opponents, it is not possible for us to obtain the retraction of a grossly untrue and damaging statement in the *New Leader*. Ed. COMM.

#### AUSTRALIAN COMMUNISTS ANSWERED.

In the March issue, under the title "Socialism and Chinese Nationalism," we replied to certain criticisms of our policy which appeared in the *Australian Workers' Weekly*, organ of the Communist Party. Immediately after going to press we received from an Australian reader, J. McElligott, a copy of correspondence between himself and the writer of the *Workers' Weekly* article. It is hardly necessary to say that the *Workers' Weekly* first ignored the reply to their attack, and then, in answer to a letter of enquiry, refused to print it on the ground of lack of space. A final letter from our comrade McElligott was likewise ignored.

As the letter by McElligott is a concise and clear statement of the policy of the Socialist Party, we have printed it below. Some other Australian readers may be interested to note the cowardly attitude of our Communist critics. Possibly the knowledge that there are local comrades willing and able to defend the Socialist position will deter the *Workers' Weekly* from again misrepresenting us. Ed. COMM.

Townsville,  
28/8/27.

The Editor,  
*The Workers' Weekly*,  
395, Sussex Street, Sydney.

Dear Sir,

As a supporter of the Socialist Party of Great Britain, I wish to draw your attention to a number of inaccurate statements in an article entitled "History and the Workers," published in the *Workers' Weekly* for Friday, July 15th, 1927.

Under the heading "The New Opportunism," the Socialist Party of Great Britain is attacked on account of an article, "Socialism or Chinese Nationalism," which appeared in the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* of March, 1927. The S.P.G.B. has been in existence since September, 1904, and during all that time its policy has been as constant as the Pole Star; it has "waged war on all other political parties, whether allegedly Labour or avowedly Capitalist"; . . . it has supported no Capitalist war and no Nationalist movement; it has always from the platform and press promulgated Socialism.

Your writer's choice of a heading, "The

*New Opportunism*," was therefore an unhappy one.

Your article quotes the second paragraph ending with . . . "including a possible war in China," and devotes 25 lines to "exposing the definitely opportunist ending of the first question," because, "Despite the facts that the principal representations of Imperialism are piling up men and munitions in China, bombarding defenceless towns, murdering thousands of inhabitants," etc., the S.P.G.B. traitorously says, "including a possible war in China."

But your article was written in July, after "the bombardment of defenceless towns," etc., by "the principal representatives of Imperialism"; the article of the S.P.G.B. was written in February, before these events took place.

Your writer is therefore a fool or a rogue, and if a rogue he is still a fool, because others of your readers will remember, as I do, that the first time allied or foreign troops or warships were engaged in the recent Chinese disturbances was on March 23rd, 1927.

The term used by the S.P.G.B., "including a possible war in China," was therefore correct, and not "definitely opportunist" (the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* is published on the 1st of the month).

Your article goes on to say, "Let us suppose that Southampton, Liverpool and London were being bombarded from sea and air—would the theoreticians of the S.P.G.B. refer to it as a possible war on England?"

I suppose some term of reproach is implied in that "theoreticians," but what it is or where he got it from Mr. Loughron does not say. If he cares to elaborate the term a little, I will deal with it.

The paragraph following in your article also leaves me mystified, and would, I think, be better, much better, for a little elaboration. I refer to the paragraph beginning, "We admit the weakness of our arguments lies in the fact that we imply the equality of Chinese and Britons," etc. Can Loughron produce anything written or published by the S.P.G.B. claiming any "superiority for hundred per cent. freedom loving Britishers over mere chows"? If not, why does he make these dirty insinuations? Is it trying to live up to his self-imposed title, a "Leader of Revolutionists"?



In keeping with his unique style, Loughron goes on to say, "In the allegedly 'unambiguous No,' the S.P.G.B. brand themselves as the henchmen of their Imperialist Masters. All their 'No' can amount to is the advocacy of a free hand for Imperial Piracy, which means the uninterrupted flow of members of our class as uniformed hirelings to strangle the aspirations of subject peoples such as India, Egypt or China, and guard the loot for their Imperial Masters."

This, despite the fact that the article, "Socialism or Chinese Nationalism," said, "Where the capitalist economic system exists (whether the government is Conservative, Liberal or Labour), armed forces are maintained for the protection of capitalist private property and capitalist interests generally. Foreign trade is one of the forces constantly creating friction with other capitalist competing countries and with 'backward' races which are unfortunate enough to dwell in parts of the earth endowed with rich natural resources. When the governing sections of the capitalist class think their interests seriously menaced, they set the armed forces in motion either at home or abroad. These armed forces are organised and controlled by these governing sections, and they are never used for any other purpose than the protection of capitalist interests. Wars waged by capitalist states involve, therefore, no working-class issue, and on no account would Socialists support them. The Socialist Party alone in this country consistently opposed the last war on Socialist grounds, and opposes any and every capitalist war. . . ."

That is what Loughron calls "the advocacy of a free hand."

It is quite evident that Loughron does not understand English, and, if it were not reckoned presumption on my part, I would like to advise him to read more slowly, not to proceed to a fresh sentence until the last one is thoroughly understood, and, if necessary, to re-read an article several times, because, after all, it's a pretty poor game writing such stuff; reading it is a waste of time and effort; and I cannot see that it does the workers' cause or any other cause any good.

After the foregoing, one is not greatly surprised to read, "The necessity of the National Revolution as the forerunner of the

Social Revolution in subject countries is ignored, despite the fact that the class-conscious of all subject countries lend their driving force to the National movement, not as an end in itself, but for the weakening of the might of the Imperialist State, the getting of our propaganda to the broad masses, the gaining of their confidence, their acceptance of our leadership—the prerequisites for the Social Revolution."

Prefaced by the usual lies — for on page 107 of the SOCIALIST STANDARD for March, in the article "Socialism or Chinese Nationalism," one reads: "We are interested in one kind of struggle only, class struggle, and primarily in that phase which consists in the endeavour by wage-earners to overthrow capitalist private property and all forms of the wages system. The Nationalist movements blazing away in different parts of the world are not working class, but capitalist, in their aim. We therefore oppose them. Patriotism has the effect of binding together the classes in each geographical area. Socialists desire that conflicting class interests shall be recognised, not obscured. Socialism and patriotism are irreconcilably antagonistic. Patriotism is anti-working class, and Chinese Nationalism is no less so than is British. The one encourages the other. We wish to strangle both."

That, according to Loughron, is 'ignoring the necessity of National Revolution as the forerunner of the Social Revolution in subject countries'!

The last few lines of Loughron's paragraph, "the getting of our propaganda to the broad masses, the gaining of their confidence, their acceptance of our leadership," are more to the point. Herein is the profound difference between the S.P.G.B. and the Communist Party. The S.P.G.B. does not desire "the gaining of the confidence of the broad masses or their leadership." There are no "leaders" in the S.P.G.B., "revolutionary" or otherwise.

The S.P.G.B. holds that "the emancipation of the working class must be the work of the working class itself," and to that end the Party devotes all its activities to the making of Socialists, knowing full well that when a sufficient number of our class realise their class interest, they will organise and put Socialism into operation.

"Leaders" will not be required; all will know the way.

So there is no need for "con men" or "magomen" to gain the confidence of the "broad masses" by taking up and advocating whatever rostrum happens to be prominent at the moment, the "Labour Party," "Child endowment," "Full pay for the unemployed," etc.

All that is required is workers who will propagate the knowledge of Socialism. Socialism is "a system of Society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth, by and in the interest of the whole community."

I remain,

Yours faithfully,  
J. McELLIGOTT.

### THE FAILURE OF THE LABOUR COLLEGES.

In July, 1925, we wrote on the significant action of the National Council of Labour Colleges in joining its old enemy, the Workers' Educational Association, in an education scheme sponsored by the Trades Union Congress. We pointed out that the acceptance of money from the Trade Unions to co-operate with such bodies as the W.E.A. and Ruskin College meant the passing of the independence of the "Movement for Independent Working-class Education." The "Plebs' League" tried to derive comfort from the fact that, while urging the N.C.L.C. to accept the scheme, they themselves were not bound in any way and could continue their independent propaganda and criticism.

Time has justified our warning. The "Plebs' League" has ceased to exist as an independent body and three years later others, including men in the N.C.L.C. itself, are recognising the truth of what we then anticipated.

In the *Sunday Worker* (22nd January) is a letter from Mr. W. N. Dias, Tutor Edinburgh District, Scottish Labour College, commenting on a book review in which T. A. Jackson had directed attention to the essential weakness of the position of the N.C.L.C.

Mr. Dias wrote as follows:—

Contact with the local Labour Colleges convinces one that there is a gradual desertion of the whole position taken up by the Labour College Movement in the past, and it is gradually becoming another edition of the old W.E.A., which years ago it (rightly) condemned.

In a subsequent issue of the *Sunday Worker*, a correspondent, who is described as being "prominently connected with the N.C.L.C.," gives further support to our criticism. The N.C.L.C., he says:—

is now fast becoming merely a piece of educational machinery, hitched on to the Trade Union machine, with its own staff of officials concerned mainly with administrative work . . . the N.C.L.C. is tending to come increasingly under the control and influence of this bureaucracy (i.e., the trade union officials) which finances it (4th March).

In particular the N.C.L.C., as we long ago pointed out, cannot hope to receive Trade Union money if at the same time it exposes the part played by Labour and Trade Union leaders in supporting the capitalist system and its ways. The N.C.L.C. had to choose and it chose the money in preference to the independence. We wrote in 1925:—

"The price of independence in the existing state of working class indifference and political backwardness is to be left outside the main field of trade union educational activity; and the N.C.L.C. and the Plebs have just decided that the price is too great." The significance of that step is now becoming evident.

H.

## LEYTON LECTURES

Sunday, April 29th, at 7.30 p.m.,

TRADES AND LABOUR HALL,  
HIGH ROAD, LEYTON.

Speaker . . . G. BELLINGHAM.

Questions and Discussion. Admission Free.

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All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 17, Mount Pleasant, London, W.C.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

**TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTIONS.**

Twelve Months, post free.. .. 2s. 6d.  
Six Months, post free .. .. 1s. 3d.

**The Socialist Standard,**

APRIL,



1928

**IS SOCIALISM ATHEISM?**

We have become famous! Our booklet on Socialism and Religion has been quoted in the very respectable organ of Puritan America, the *Boston Evening Transcript*. In a discussion on the attitude of Socialism towards Religion in their columns, a supporter of Religion quotes long extracts from our pamphlet to the discomfiture of the so-called "Christian Socialists." In an attempt to reply a lady (Edith Williams) writes from Brookline, Massachusetts, as follows (January 27th 1928) about the S.P.G.B.

This organisation is a tiny and unimportant body of less than 1,000 members, which does not belong to the Labour and Socialist International, to which the British Labour party, the Socialist party in this country, and all the important Socialist parties throughout the world are affiliated, largely because it refuses to abide by the regulation that religion is a private matter and that no one may attack religion from a Socialist party platform. There are, no doubt, Socialists who are atheists just as there are Democrats and Republicans who are atheists, but when they insist on attacking religion from a Socialist party platform they are, of course, excluded from the party just as the Socialist party of Great Britain is excluded from the British Labour party.

This letter is typical of the religious fraternity. It dodges the essential question and argues that we have only small numbers. From that angle the "Socialist Party of America" is ruled out of court. If numbers decide and not principles, then

the Republicans and Democrats are right. If numbers are the test of truth, the great mass of workers who supported the last war were right and Socialists were wrong. Even judged by their own party (the S.P. of America) they are wrong to-day, because that party once claimed over 100,000 members whilst to-day they number a few thousands!

The arguments and evidence supplied in our pamphlet, proving that Socialism and Religion are fundamentally opposed to each other, are ignored by the apologist of the Socialist Party of America.

The lack of knowledge of this "harmoniser" of Socialism and Religion is shown in her false statement that we were excluded from the British Labour Party!

Excluded! The Socialist Party of Great Britain, unlike the Communists, has never tried to join the Labour Party. We are Socialists. We stand for the interests of and appeal to the working class alone. The Labour Party has a capitalist programme and has within its ranks Tories, Liberals and all shades of opinion except Socialists. The Labour Party appeals not to a class, but to the community, as Ramsay MacDonald told the Ilford electors at the bye-election just over.

We are opposed to the Labour Party and therefore exclude *ourselves* from that party of supporters of capitalism. Not on the ground of religion, but on the fundamental grounds of the class struggle, which includes our attitude towards religion as just one item of conflict. The Labour Party, like the S.P. of America, appeal to all shades of superstition because they want votes and not Socialists.

The real purpose of this brief article is to draw attention to the distortion of our attitude by avowed anti-Socialists. The writer who quoted our pamphlet in the *Boston Transcript* has written a booklet for the "Movement against Socialism in the Church," entitled *Is Atheism inherent in Socialism?*

This booklet quotes our pamphlet extensively and also re-hashes a large number of quotations from alleged Socialists that he has culled from such Catholic Handbooks as Father Ming's "Religion of Socialism," and Jesuit Cathrein's "Socialism." His only "quotation" from Marx is a fake. He accuses Marx of saying: "The idea of God must be destroyed; it is the keystone of a perverted civilisation." His authority for

this is not Marx's own works, but the religious writer Peabody, in "Jesus Christ and the Social Question." Like most of our opponents he has not read Marx's own work but lifts alleged quotations from others. Any student of Marx would easily see that the view fathered on Marx is foreign to all Marx's materialist views. Marx never held that capitalism was a perverted civilisation. He never held that ideas were keystones of society. His views were entirely contrary to that. What Mr. Peabody has done is to kindly take the outburst of Bakunin (the Anarchist and idealist opponent of Marx) from the Manifesto of the Swiss and Anarchist so-called International Working Men's Association. Bakunin and other 'Anarchists' violent and futile denunciation of "Gods" was opposed by Marx and Engels, who held that Socialism was not Atheism, but a positive and constructive attitude towards life and society involving a recognition of the material basis of social relations and institutions.

The views of Marx are not dealt with by the supporters of religion. The claim that Socialism is Atheism ignores the fact that Atheism is a negative attitude towards belief in the "Gods" whereas the materialist view of history held by the Socialist leaves no room for gods or spooks in our outlook on the world, but explains the rise as well as exodus of ideas of "Gods and Ghosts" by the changes in the conditions under which men work and live. The Socialist does not set out to *destroy the idea of God*—that is the idealist, topsy-turvy policy of Atheism. Our policy is to recognise the cause of social beliefs and to work for the establishment of a system whose social conditions men can understand without believing in the "Hand of God."

**LECTURES.**

**FRIARS HALL,  
237, BLACKFRIARS ROAD, S.E.**

**Sundays, 7.30 p.m.**

**APRIL 1st. - Speaker, S. CASH.**

**" 8th. - " E. HARDY.**

**" 15th. - " W. McHAFFIE.**

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION INVITED.

**ADMISSION FREE.**

**A DEFENDER OF THE RUSSIAN GOVERNMENT.****A CRITICISM AND OUR REPLY.**

To the Editor of the SOCIALIST STANDARD.

Bexley, Kent.

Comrade Loheit's letter is straightforward enough, and I do not agree that he "makes a number of sweeping statements."

Your enmity towards the Russian revolution appears to be the result of your conception of social change. You evidently believe that capitalism can end and a shutter be put up, and that the new socialist society can begin afresh. Thus, in your January issue, A. Kohn wrote: "International Socialism will not deal with the effects of capitalist conditions, but lay the economic foundations upon which new sex relations will flourish." When it is remembered that Marx, in his letter on the Gotha Programme, wrote: "What we are concerned with is a communist society, not as it might have developed upon an independent basis of its own, but as it actually issues from capitalist society. In every respect, alike economically, morally and intellectually, it is afflicted with the congenital defects of the system from which it has sprung"—it will be clear that Kohn's statement is quite un-Marxian.

This may help your other anti-Russian contributors to grasp that, although socialism is not fully established in Russia, the Soviet Union is no longer a capitalist State.

Your treatment of the Russian revolution is wrong because, while you may take a quotation from the "Manchester Guardian" of a report in the German bourgeois press, of a statement made by Trotsky, you do not give the statements of Buharin, Mikoyan, Yaroslavsky, or others of the Party majority, on the points of dispute with the opposition.

During a discussion at the recent Fifteenth Congress of the Russian Communist Party, Rykov said: "The Party directs the State and is responsible for its administration and for the socialist development of an enormous country." You hate the Bolsheviks for this: but you seem to have forgotten the Communist Manifesto, where it says: "The Communists are the most advanced and resolute section of the working class parties of every country, that section which pushes forward all others; theoretically, they have over the great mass of the proletariat the advantage of clearly understanding the line of march, the conditions, and the ultimate general results of the proletarian movement."

It is disgraceful to say that the Bolsheviks "dispersed the assembly by force, and have dictated by the same means ever since"; or that "they cannot revolutionise the economic basis of society by issuing decrees, nor by exiling or imprisoning all who are guilty of pointing out these obvious facts."

In conclusion, I must say that some of your contributors who write about "legal and political rights," need to remember Marx's exposure of bourgeois parliamentarism in "The Civil War in France"; and the last part of the Manifesto, explaining why Communists "in France ally themselves with the Social-Democrats," and "in Switzerland support the Radicals," and that



"they openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions"; together with the final portion of the "Poverty of Philosophy," declaring for violent revolution, need to be reviewed by some of your writers who tend to ignore whole passages of Marx. It would be pleasant to see attacks on Capitalism in the SOCIALIST STANDARD, as a change from untruth about the Communist International.

Yours for history,  
STUART FEATHER.

#### OUR REPLY.

(We have for convenience numbered the paragraphs in Mr. Feather's letter.)

(1) We did not say that Lobeit's letter was not straightforward.

To say that we do not understand the "difference between dictatorship and democracy," and to make bold assertions as to what might have happened in Russia if the Bolsheviks had adopted a different policy 10 years ago and to give no evidence for either assertion, is in our view, rightly described as making "sweeping statements." Perhaps, in any event, Mr. Lobeit will be able to state his own case.

(2) Mr. Feather talks about our "enmity towards the Russian Revolution" and later on (see 5) of our hatred for the Bolsheviks. He gives no evidence whatever for either of these charges, both of which are as vague and unilluminating as to say that we are "enemies of the battle of Waterloo." We do state as a fact that the Russian Revolution has not and could not have achieved the impossibility of creating Socialism in industrially, socially and politically backward Russia. Mr. Feather quotes Marx on the obstacles which will face the working class when Socialist society "issues from capitalist society." This brings us straight to the heart of our criticism of people like Mr. Feather who think that an intelligent and armed minority can create Socialism when there is no developed capitalist system for it to issue from.

The statement quoted from the article by A. Kohn is clear enough if read in conjunction with the preceding arguments. The capitalists here and the Bolshevik Government in Russia are dealing with the problems of sex relationships only in the framework of capitalism. That the Bolsheviks show greater enlightenment does not alter the fact that the economic system in Russia is capitalist and will produce its inevitable effects. The prime task of Socialists will be to change the basis of

society and thus get at causes. To say that the working class which tackles this problem will itself be the product of capitalist environment is a truism which we naturally accept. Mr. Feather cannot conceive that "capitalism can end and a shutter be put up." We, on the contrary, cannot conceive of the wage-slave condition of the working class being brought to an end or being altered in any material way, until after the organised working class has definitely put a shutter up on the political and social control of the capitalist class. What bearing the quotation from the Gotha Programme has on this question it is impossible to perceive.

(3) Mr. Feather gives no scrap of evidence to show that the Soviet Union "is no longer a capitalist state." We will consider his evidence when he produces it. He does not disclose precisely what is his view, but the common fallacy shared by Labour Party and Communists reformers is the illusion that capitalism ceases to be capitalism when it is administered by a Lenin and his associates, or by a Ramsay MacDonald.

(4) Mr. Feather is so busy telling us what books we read and don't read, and airing his views about our loves and hates, that he has, it seems, no time to acquaint himself with our position. If he will refer again to the December issue he will see that we published the extracts from Trotsky's Memorandum for the information of our readers simply because Trotsky's views are not readily accessible to them. The views of Trotsky's opponents are readily accessible in numerous Communist publications. May we also remind Mr. Feather that we expressly dissociated ourselves from the programme in question. Our views are not a copy of Trotsky's but have been repeated in our journal at intervals for over nine years. Our main criticism was made soon after the Bolshevik's seized power. Time has justified it and apparently Trotsky and others are coming to see the soundness of it.

(5) Mr. Feather knows and knows why we "hate the Bolsheviks." May we ask him to believe that we have something better to do than go about hating Bolsheviks. If he still believes that we hate them may we ask him for evidence, and finally, may we remind him that as early as 1917 and 1918, when those who were later to blossom forth as Communists were first applauding Kerensky's rise and then de-

ploring his fall, we almost alone in this country, were giving them due credit for the fine stand they made. Is Mr. Feather unable to appreciate the view that the Bolsheviks, like every other body which seeks working class emancipation, are justified, not by their sincerity or their intentions, but by the correctness of their position?

Mr. Feather quotes some remarks from the Communist Manifesto about the relations between the Communists and the proletariat in general, but ignores the fact that the overwhelming mass of the population in Russia is peasant, not proletarian. This is the determining factor, not the hopes and beliefs of the Russian Communists.

(6) Why is it disgraceful to say that the Bolsheviks dispersed the Constituent assembly by force and have dictated by the same means ever since? Mr. Feather does not, let it be noted, deny the truth of those statements.

(7) Does Mr. Feather then believe that the economic basis of society can be revolutionised by issuing decrees or by imprisoning opponents? We, like Marx, are of the opinion that "no social order ever disappears before all the productive forces for which there is room within it have been developed." (See Preface to "Critique.")

(8) It is impossible to gather what is the connection between the phrase "legal and political rights" (and Mr. Feather, with typical slipshodness here, as elsewhere, omits to give references for his quotations) and some remarks in the Communist Manifesto about associating with other parties. The section of the Manifesto referred to is in any event dismissed by Engels in his 1888 Preface as antiquated because "the political situation has been entirely changed." It is kind of Mr. Feather to give as a list of books we should read and tell us that we "tend to ignore whole passages of Marx" (whatever that may mean), but it would be more useful and to the point if he would state precisely what is his case against Socialism or in favour of a minority armed revolt or whatever it is he considers necessary.

(9) Mr. Feather has not, so far, produced even one alleged untruth about the Communist International, much less proved his charge. His implication that the SOCIALIST STANDARD does not contain attacks on capitalism is untrue and is of course known by him to be untrue. We do not, it is true,

act as share pushers trying to induce investors to buy shares in the Soviet Government's 9 per cent. Rail Loan as do various so-called Communist journals. Perhaps if we did Mr. Feather would be satisfied that we were attacking capitalism. H.

#### THE AIMS OF THE I.L.P. EXPOSED.

Below is a letter from Mr. H. W. R. Keeble, who wrote a letter published last month over the name "I.L.P.'er, Catford."

Catford, S.E.6.

Dear Comrades,  
12.3.28.  
I thank you for publishing my letter and for your reply, to which I should like to raise one or two points.

(1) Capital. You say that "the means of production will not then (when communally owned) be capital." That is, at the present the means of production are termed Capital, which agrees with the I.L.P. statement you are attempting to criticise.

(ii) This is far more important. The I.L.P. realise that before the Socialist State can be realised there must be a period of transition, a period of "State Capitalism." The S.P.G.B. does not tackle this important period, but you say "it is not a step towards Socialism." I will refer you to the pamphlet you sent me, "Socialism Utopian and Scientific," page 83, where you will find that Marx and Engels maintain that it is economically inevitable that the last phase of the capitalist system must be State capitalism.

"In any case . . . the State will ultimately have to undertake the direction of production. This necessity for conversion into State property," etc. From the footnote.

"For only when the means of production and distribution have actually outgrown the form of management by joint-stock companies and when, therefore, the taking them over by the State has become 'economically' inevitable, only then . . . is there an economic advance, the attainment of another step preliminary to the taking over of all productive forces by Society itself."

There you have the immediate aims of the I.L.P. justified by Marx himself. Since you are "Marxian Socialists" no further comment—but agreement—should be necessary.

(iii) My remark that "H" should feel ashamed of himself referred to the intolerant and sneering style of his reply to I.L.P.'er, Croydon; not to any statement that he made, although it was obvious that he was confusing the transitional period with a socialist state. That brings me to the broader question that has long puzzled me: Why does the S.P.G.B. in preaching the cause of the freedom that only Socialism can bring, maintain such a dogmatic principle as the last one, "Declares war on all other political parties." Owing to that, I maintain that the I.L.P. has a better idea of Socialism than the S.P.G.B., inasmuch as we do tolerate the idea of free thought and speech. I am raising these points because I think that one of the greatest obstacles



in the path to Socialism is the antagonism that various "anti-capitalist" parties show to each other, and of which the "Capitalist Press" knows how to make such good use.

Yours fraternally,

H. W. R. KEEBLE,  
I.L.P'er, Catford.

(iv) P.S.—Since you propose to run candidates for Parliament, could you let us have articles dealing with the transitory period from the S.P.G.B. outlook?

#### OUR REPLY.

(1) Mr. Keeble here overlooks the important fact that the means of production at present are not only "termed" capital; they are capital. That is to say they represent money invested for the purpose of making profit for the propertied class out of the exploitation of the workers. Under Socialism there will be no wages system, no profit, and consequently no capital. The means of production, no longer capital, will be communally owned. The I.L.P.'s statement that they aim at the "communal ownership of capital," is therefore just nonsense.

(2) We had said that the I.L.P. aims not at Socialism but at State capitalism or Nationalisation, and we quoted from the I.L.P. publication, "The Socialist Programme," in support of our contention. Mr. Keeble now says that this is not the aim of the I.L.P., but merely a first step. If Mr. Keeble will produce some kind of evidence in support of his statement we will deal with it. In fact, "The Socialist Programme" (particularly Chapter 5—"A Socialist Policy for Industry") definitely offers state capitalism, based upon the continued payment of interest to the capitalist class, not as a first step but as the aim itself.

Instead of showing from I.L.P. sources that his statements about the I.L.P. are correct, Mr. Keeble makes quotations from "Socialism, Utopian and Scientific," to support his case.

Engels, writing in the seventies of last century, outlined the development of capitalist industry from small scale businesses, through the joint stock company, to trusts and combines. Reading the signs of the times and observing that the State was taking over various industries and means of transport and communication, Engels expressed the view that the capitalist class in their own interests would go on nationalising posts and telegraphs and railways and

mines, etc., but what he emphatically did not say was that the workers should supinely wait while this process went on. He here, as always, emphasised the fact that the transformation of society to socialism must be a conscious and deliberate act of the working class. In the footnote, from which Mr. Keeble quotes, Engels goes on to say (P. 84) that this process of nationalisation "was in no sense a socialistic measure, directly or indirectly, consciously or unconsciously."

Because Engels in 1875 thought that the capitalist class would probably choose State ownership rather than the continued development of trusts, Mr. Keeble proposes to ignore the tremendous changes wrought in capitalist industry in the last half century, and bases his policy on a 50 years' old cautious forecast of tendencies that has proved to be too narrow. Because in the seventies Bismarck was pushing forward State ownership, Mr. Keeble refuses to recognise the perfectly plain fact that since the war the tendency has definitely been away from State capitalism towards the national, imperial and international trusts. He is apparently unaware that Germany has denationalised her railways and (partly) her post office, Belgium her railways, Italy her post office (partly) and her telegraph and telephones wholly, and that Australia is selling her State ships. At the moment of writing it is anticipated that the new wireless and cable combine will take over the State cables and wireless. If it is true that the I.L.P. bases its policy on what was happening 50 years' ago, but not to-day, that may help to explain the unsoundness of I.L.P. policy.

As Mr. Keeble feels compelled to follow out meticulously every passing judgment expressed by Engels, will he please note that on page 27 Engels expressed the view that the Salvation Army may one day become dangerous to the capitalist class. Will Mr. Keeble advocate an I.L.P.—Salvation Army alliance on the ground of Engel's remark?

It is typical of Mr. Keeble's loose method of argument that on the strength of a statement written by Engels, he should feel entitled to deduce that "Marx and Engels maintain, etc."

(3) The S.P.G.B. declares war on other political parties in this country because it holds (a) that only the abolition of capitalist private ownership will solve the poverty

problem of the workers, and (b) that the use of the vote by the organised workers for the conquest of the political machinery, is the method. No other party believes these two things necessary. The I.L.P., for instance, thinks that nationalisation or State capitalism will prove a solution.

The S.P.G.B., being a Socialist organisation, cannot "tolerate" non-Socialists in its ranks. It does, however—in contrast with the I.L.P.—freely open its meetings and its press to expressions of opinion by all opponents. If the I.L.P. is Socialist how does it manage to retain Mr. J. R. MacDonald as a member?

(4) Mr. Keeble, knowing that I.L.P. candidates fight elections on non-Socialist programmes because they want votes and cannot hope to get returned unless they can get the sympathy of non-Socialist electors, is unable to believe that we mean what we say when we announce that our candidates will ask for votes for Socialism and nothing else. Socialism (see our "Declaration of Principles" on the back page) is our only programme. At present the task of a Socialist party is to propagate Socialism. When that has resulted in the organisation of the working class on a Socialist basis and they have obtained possession of the machinery of Government, then and only then will commence the work of transforming the property basis of society. That will be a purely economic problem, not a political one, since the power of the Capitalist class will by then have been disposed of. What the I.L.P. calls an immediate programme "is a programme of reform for application within the capitalist system under Liberal, Tory or Labour administrations."

If Mr. Keeble will refer to the *New Leader* (24th February) he will see an "Election Programme," chosen out of over 300 which were submitted in a competition. That Election Programme (approved among others by Mr. James Maxton) contains no reference whatever to Socialism. It is a list of 41 reforms of capitalism. These are 41 reasons why we, as a Socialist Party, must oppose the I.L.P. H.

**YOUR** newsagent can obtain the "Socialist Standard" through the wholesalers, W. H. Smith & Son. Ask him to get your copy, but if you have any difficulty send direct to 17, Mount Pleasant, London, W.C.1.

#### HOW THE I.L.P. "MAKE" HISTORY.

Most of our readers, no doubt, have heard of the I.L.P. summer school. One of the schoolboys, apparently, has written an essay entitled "A History of English Socialism."\* The "New Leader," Ltd., have had the temerity to charge a shilling for it.

It contains very little that is new, and that little is false. Several items which are also false lack even the dubious merit of novelty.

Consisting of about 130 pages, two-thirds of the booklet is occupied with an account of Utopianism and Chartism. Throughout this portion the author maintains a tolerable degree of accuracy, mainly because he has simply cribbed from previous writers on the subject, such as Beer.

In Chapter VIII. he devotes ten pages to "Karl Marx and the International." He commences by patting Marx on the back as the Darwin of Sociology, and quotes the well-known passage from the Preface to the "Critique of Political Economy," wherein is stated Marx's view of history. It is important to notice that this includes his definition of the social revolution, i.e., the conflict between the forces of production of society and the forms of property, which control, and, at certain stages, hamper the development of those forces. The author soon shows us how little he has grasped the meaning of this passage when he commences to refer to Marx's "inconsistencies."

As an example, he refers to the Communist Manifesto. "In part II. we find that the proletariat are to use political power to wrest by degrees all capital from the bourgeoisie, while part IV. concludes by stating that the aim of the Communists can only be attained by the forcible overthrow of existing social conditions; two entirely incompatible methods of transition" (p. 99). Our schoolboy author is thus evidently ignorant of the fact that the political machinery includes the armed forces of the nation, and would be of precious little value to the party of revolution if it didn't. Seemingly, also, he has never heard that Oliver Cromwell, for instance, was at once a Parliamentarian and a military commander (I mention this specifically English historical character as the

\*A History of British Socialism.



author, like most of his ilk, is fond of pretending that "revolution" is an alien product).

In dealing with the S.D.F., the author once more allows his I.L.P. prejudices to obliterate any regard for accuracy which he may possess. Writing of Morris, he says: "Marx's theories made no appeal to him" (p. 105). Possibly this is why Morris collaborated with Belfort Bax in "Socialism; its growth and outcome," in which the Marxist viewpoint is definitely expounded. He refers to the secession of several Scottish and London branches, and the subsequent formation of the S.L.P. and the S.P.G.B. He gets mixed in his dates, sneers at these bodies as "doctrinaire and impossible," but makes no attempt to deal with the position or history of either body.

The Fabian Society, with its policy of permeation and its frank rejection of Marxism, is next dealt with. "Its influence on public opinion has been profound," we are told. We have yet to notice any advantages accruing to the workers, however. "The gravamen of the Fabian criticism of capitalism was not that the worker was robbed of his surplus value"—(oh! dear, no!)—"but that the community was robbed of socially created differential wealth" (p. 110). Just what is meant by this the author wisely leaves to the imagination of his readers.

"The Independent Labour Party was largely influenced by the Fabian social philosophy," we are next informed, which helps to account for its confusing propaganda, no doubt. "The I.L.P. has never accepted the economic system of Marx . . . and as the literature and periodicals of the party have been mainly written by such non-Marxian Socialists as McDonald, Snowden, Glasier and Hardie, Marx's system is practically unknown in the English Socialist Movement" (p. 121). The reason soon becomes obvious. As the author shows, the I.L.P. were concerned with numbers rather than with education. Hence they bent all their energies to wean the Trade Unions from their allegiance to the official Liberals, and constructed "a party built up of trade unions where members with passive consent are affiliated in blocks of hundreds of thousands at a time" (p. 119).

The author omits to mention the intrigues of McDonald, Snowden, Hardie, and others with the Liberals, and the joint candidatures of the two parties in "double-

barrelled" constituencies such as Leicester, Blackburn and Merthyr Tydvil. These facts show that the I.L.P. has developed by exploiting Trade Union support, both financially and politically, without any advance of working-class interests.

The author refers to the "very definite pacifist attitude" of the I.L.P. during the war, but makes no attempt to explain the activities of its members on recruiting platforms or the building of cruisers, etc., during the Labour Party's term of office. Although "the I.L.P. is the socialist leaven within the Labour Movement," the decision of the Labour Party to form local branches raised the question as to whether the I.L.P. has any further justification for its existence, and one of its most prominent leaders, Philip Snowden, has recently concluded that it has not. It has served as a useful ladder for political climbers, who, having reached the goal of their ambitions, are quite prepared to kick it down. So much for the value of non-Marxian "Socialism."

The tit-bit of the whole book, however, is reserved for the brief appendix purporting to deal with the Communist Party.

We are told that this body was formed "by the fusion of the bulk of the branches of the B.S.P. with one or two small and insignificant groups bearing such grandiloquent names as the Socialist Labour Party and the Socialist Party of Great Britain." The S.L.P. (since defunct) expelled the bunch of intriguers who tried to drag it into the C.P. The S.P.G.B., still very much alive and kicking, has consistently and successfully opposed the C.P. since its inception. This cannot be said for the I.L.P. So much for the "historian's" respect for facts. E. B.

## THE 24th ANNUAL PARTY CONFERENCE

WILL BE HELD ON

Friday and Saturday, April 6th and 7th,  
FAIRFAX HALL,  
STANHOPE GARDENS, HARRINGAY, N.

Commence at 10 a.m. Open to All.

THE ANNUAL PARTY RE-UNION will take place in the above Hall on Good Friday, April 6th, at 7.30 p.m. Doors open 7 p.m. Tickets from any Branch Secretary, or Head Office.

## HERO WORSHIP.

A Conversation with a Visitor from Mars.  
(Continued from February Issue).

"Although," remarked the Martian, "you have certainly illustrated the fact that the 'great man' is not the dominant factor in history, you have not yet given me any definite theory which explains the progression of changes and development in human society."

"Many apologies for the omission, Marty, old man," I replied, "but if you will lend me your esteemed ears for a while—figuratively speaking, of course—I will endeavour to acquaint you with the two main theories opposed to the Carlyle conception of history. Buckle,\* the nineteenth century historian, stresses the importance of 'climate, food, soil, and the general aspect of nature' as the great factors in determining the course of social development. Certainly, in the infancy of a race, these factors are of primary importance in deciding, for instance, whether society should be pastoral or agricultural, nomadic or settled. But this theory does not account for the successive changes in the social and economic basis of society in the countries where these physical agents have remained constant for centuries; the America of to-day, Marty, is radically different in its social and economic structure from the fatherland of the Last of the Mohicans, despite the fact that 'climate, food, soil, and the general aspect of nature' have remained virtually the same (although, perhaps, Buckle would have ascribed this transformation to the change in the people's food due to 'adulteration's artful aid!'). Also, the same systems of society have sprung up in countries which bear no resemblance at all in their physical characteristics. Thus, I fear, our historian comes somewhat unbuckled! Where, then, must we turn for the true explanation? Late in the 18th century Franklin made the pronouncement that man differed from other animals by the fact that he was the sole tool-maker; but Franklin did not realise that therein lay the key to historical development.

"To satisfy the needs of society, Marty, men enter into certain relations with each other in order to produce wealth in the most efficient and convenient way. These industrial relations correspond to the stage society has reached in the development of

\*History of Civilisation.

its productive forces, while the sum of these industrial relations constitutes society's economic structure. Now, allow me to indicate to you the three great economic structures of society known to European civilisation in order to illustrate the fact that the industrial relations of men vary according to the state of society's productive forces.

The principal industry of the ancient world, Marty, was agriculture, and the system of production was chattel-slavery, which was exceedingly efficient, as men themselves were still the main instruments of production, while world-peace (Pax Romana) made this human property secure. With the advent of the breaking up of the world-market (as known to the Ancients), however, land became the main means of subsistence, and war was always imminent; the system of production then became one based on serfdom, which conveniently combined the utility of the slave and the reliable fighting power of the 'free' man. Now in modern times, my friend, the machine is the great factor in production, and thus the value of employees, in the eyes of the owners of the means of production, is far less than was the value of the slave or the serf; while their dogs and horses in old age are well cared for, the men who have created their wealth are regarded, in the main, as mere human sponges, to be wrung dry of their labour power, and when ineffective through sickness or age, to be flung upon the industrial refuse-heap. In other words, we still endure the obsolete and increasingly-disastrous Capitalist system of society.

(To be continued).

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Sundays: Highbury Corner, 11.15 a.m.  
Clapham Common, 3 p.m.  
Victoria Park, 4 p.m.  
Tottenham, West Green Corner, 11.30 a.m.  
Paddington, Prince of Wales, 11.30 a.m.  
Bethnal Green, opposite Salmon and Ball, 7.30 p.m.

Mondays: Paddington, Prince of Wales, 8 p.m.  
Becontree, Burnside Road, and Green Lanes, 8 p.m.

Wednesdays: Hackney, Paragon Rd. and Mare St. 8 p.m.

Fridays: Clerkenwell, Almeida St., Upper St., N., 8 p.m.  
West Ham, Water Lane 8 p.m.  
Leyton, James Lane, High Road, 8 p.m.

HANLEY BRANCH MEETINGS.

Sundays: Hanley, Market Square, 7 p.m.  
Burslem, St. John's Square, 7 p.m.



**BRANCH DIRECTORY.**

**BATTERSEA.**—Sec., 2, Hanbury-road, S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns-road. Discussion second Thurs. in month.

**BECONTREE.**—Sec., S. Cash, 32, Greenway. Public invited.

**BETHNAL GREEN.**—Branch meets Mondays, 8 p.m., at 2, Co-operative Buildings, 361, Bethnal Green-rd., E.2. Sec., D. Jacobs, 28, Lylal Road, Bow, E.3.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec. E. Jesper, 36, Rollason-rd., Erdington. Branch meets The Continental Café, Moor St., 1st and 3rd Sundays at 11 a.m.

**CAMBERWELL.**—Sec., J. Goodfellow, 40, Solon New Road, Clapham, S.W.4. Branch meets at Camberwell Trades Council Room, 6A, Artichoke Place, Camberwell Green, every Friday at 8 p.m. Discussions—public invited.

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

**CLERKENWELL.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at 17, Mount Pleasant, W.C.1. Discussions first Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.—all invited. Sec., at above address.

**EAST LONDON.**—Sec., A. Jacobs, 78, Eric-st., Mile-end, E.8. Branch meets first and third Mondays in month at above address.

**EAST HAM.**—Branch meets at 1, Tyrone-road, East Ham. Wednesdays at 8 p.m. Communications. Sec. at above address.

**EDINBURGH.**—Sec., 15, Barclay-place, Edinburgh.

**HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Mondays, 8 p.m. at The Old Gravel Pit Hall, Mare-street, Hackney. Branch Business 1st and 3rd Mondays. Discussions 2nd and 4th Mondays. Sec. at above address.

**HANLEY.**—Branch meets Tuesdays, Working Men's Club, Glass-st. Sec., C. Cook, 64, Sidney St.

**HULL.**—Branch meetings, Tuesday, at 8 p.m., at the Trade and Labour Club (Jarratt-street entrance). Discussion after meeting. All readers in Hull requested to attend.

**ISLINGTON.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 144, Seven Sister-rd., Holloway, N. Sec., M. Baker, 18, Orpingley-rd., N.7.

**LEYTON.**—Sec., A. Holland, 396, Lea Bridge-rd., Leyton. Branch meets 8 p.m., Trades and Labour Hall, Grove House, High-rd., every Monday. Public invited.

**MANCHESTER.**—Sec., W. Addison, 111, West Park-street, Salford, Manchester.—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month, 7.45 p.m., at 114, Duke St., Stretford-road.

**PADDINGTON.**—Branch meeting held on 2nd and 4th Fridays, 8 p.m., in room above the Co-operative Stores, 306, Kilburn-lane, W.9 (side door).

**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Sec., J. Bird, 5 Welling-ton-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.

**TOOTING.**—Sec., 15, University-road, Collier's Wood, S.W.19. Branch meets every Friday at 8 p.m. at Tooting Adult School, 971, Garratt-lane, S.W.17.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Secretary 22, Dunloe-ave., N.15. Branch meets Fridays, Room 2, Trades Hall, 7, Bruce Grove. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.

**WALTHAMSTOW.**—Sec., S. E. Williams, 3, Dyson-rd., Leytonstone, E.11. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.

**WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107 Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at Secretary's address.

**WEST HAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford rd., Stratford. Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

**WOOD GREEN.**—All communications to Sec., F. W. Godfrey, 71, Falkland Road, N.8.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interests of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great HOLDS— Britain

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local. In order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The Socialist Party of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



# THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

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LONDON, MAY, 1928.

[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

## SOCIALISM *versus* LIBERALISM.

### OUR DEBATE WITH PHILIP GUEDALLA.

The following report of the above debate is reprinted (by permission) from the *Manchester Guardian* (April 21st, 1928):—

Mr. Philip Guedalla, prospective Liberal candidate for the Rusholme Division, and Mr. J. Fitzgerald, of London, a representative of the Socialist Party of Great Britain, last night debated, before a large audience in the Co-operative Society's Hall, Platt Lane, Rusholme, the question: Should the working class support the Liberal or the Socialist Party?

Mr. Guedalla said the Liberal Party, with its history, need not be ashamed of facing its fellow-countrymen and seeing if it had any contribution to make to the solution of the problems of the day. But the real test was: What are the parties going to do with the problems that faced us to-day? The great problem, whatever name it was called by, could be called the problem of industry. Was the Liberal future or the Socialist future the more promising thing for British industry, upon which the welfare of all of us depended? Liberalism believed that two things were essential if we were going to have better conditions in industry. The first was peace throughout the world. The second was the keeping of obstacles out of the way—in other words, Free Trade. Liberals did not believe in nationalisation, because they did not believe nationalisation would pay. They believed that a State-run industry would not produce as much wealth as industry run on other lines, and it was no good devising the fairest way of sharing out the swag if there was not so much swag

to divide out. Moreover, they did not believe nationalisation touched the real industrial evil. That evil consisted of a sense of injustice in the minds of the workers concerning their status.

To meet that, Liberals believed it would be just that when the worker went into employment he should know the terms on which he was employed, which he often did not—that he should have a definite contract. Liberals believed that a worker dismissed in certain circumstances should have a right of appeal. Liberals wanted to give facilities for spreading the ownership of British industry over a greater number. Far too few people owned the show to-day in Great Britain. Liberals wanted a great drift in the direction of whatever was the fairest way of sharing out the proceeds of industry that was suited to each industry. Then Liberals wanted to introduce the principle of self-government into industry. They wanted the acceptance of the principle of "cards on the table" in industry, so that the workers should know what the condition of an industry really was, so that the workers could really be partners in the industry.

#### A SOCIAL CLEAVAGE.

Mr. Fitzgerald said the fundamental fact of society to-day was that there was a deep cleavage. On one side there was the working class—the class that lived by the sale of their services—and on the other the class that lived on profit derived from the ownership of capital. The economic circumstances of the two resulted in the worker



class being a slave class. In that sense the worker class were the slaves of the capitalist class. How were they kept enslaved? By the possession of political power; ultimately upon the control of the fighting forces for the purpose of keeping the other class enslaved. The working class could get control by obtaining control of the political machine. It came down, then, in the first instance, to the control of Parliament, which was the centre of power in all modern States. That was the lesson which the working class had got first to learn—to send their own representatives to Parliament.

Mr. Guedalla said that Liberals did not believe in class. They did not believe in a conception of society which represented different classes at the ends of a rope engaged in a tug-of-war. He would submit that you were not going to pull British industry together by making quotations from Karl Marx. Mr. Fitzgerald had not told them one single, actual measure that we ought to pass. There was no use in arguing with ghosts and shadows and slinging philosophy at one's head. Mr. Fitzgerald had not deigned to say a single word about how a concern like the cotton industry was to be dealt with. He had not attempted to answer questions which had been put specifically to him.

Mr. Fitzgerald, in reply, quoted Mr. Philip Kerr, a Liberal, upon the tremendous modern development of international trustification, and from a Government report which said that five groups controlled half the food supply of the world. They would, he said, be buried under world trusts before the Liberal Industrial Report could be embodied in legislation. The Socialist was the only one who had called attention to the modern economic developments and tendencies, and he would ask the audience to observe that Mr. Guedalla had not ventured to touch his analysis or confute his arguments. Mr. Guedalla said he wanted to spread ownership. Very well. The only way to do that was to extend social ownership. He would agree with Mr. Guedalla that nationalisation would not go far, because nationalisation would leave industry under the control of the capitalist class through Parliament, and leave the workers still slaves. Not nationalisation, but socialisation—ownership by society—was the thing needful. Mr. Guedalla had asked what were

the Socialists going to do about foreign trade. The answer was that foreign trade was going. With the great extension of international trusts how could there be any foreign trade?

Mr. Guedalla said he hoped Mr. Fitzgerald would come and say what he had said about nationalisation to some of his Socialist friends in the Rusholme Division. He had advised the workers to collar industry. The end of that story was an idle man sitting on a rusty machine.

Mr. Fitzgerald, winding up the debate, said he had been asked who would do the selling under Socialism. Under Socialism there would be no selling. They would have no need to sell what was their own. Organise production for use instead of for profit, and there would be no need to sell. Mr. Guedalla said you could not divide the swag when there was no swag, or less swag, to divide. But the fact was that the swag was choking us. The problem of production had been solved. The possibilities of production were so immense that they had increased beyond present consumption. It was being pointed out by more than one writer and observer that you could increase efficiency and yet create unemployment. The problem was rather the problem of distribution and consumption.

#### WOOD GREEN.

Wood Green Branch has been reorganised and invites all those who agree with the party to join up and help in the work for Socialism in this district.

F. W. GODFREY,  
Secretary,  
71, Falkland Road, N8.

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#### UNEMPLOYMENT IN AUSTRALIA.

Melbourne.

26/12/27.

A Letter from the Socialist Party of  
Australia.

While Australia is being boomed abroad—by emigration touts—as a paradise for the workers, and thousands are flocking to her shores in search of work, in the capital cities the unemployed are marching the streets, registering at the Government Labour Bureaus, and sending deputations to the State Governments asking for sustenance or work.

All the old fallacies that have done service for the last century are being trotted out by the pen-valets, politicians and other hangers-on of the Capitalist class. Free Trade and protection hold pride of place, although in countries in which either of these fiscal policies is in operation, unemployment still remains a problem.

According to *Steeds Review*, June, 1927, the figures submitted by the League of Nations demonstrated that the percentage of unemployed in Australia was greater than any other nation associated with the League.

The following figures were given by Mr. Tunnecliffe, deputy leader of the Victorian Labour Government: That from 6 to 9 per cent. of the workers of the Commonwealth are workless all the time. This represents 136,000 workers.

When the Labour Government came into power in Victoria, it set out valiantly to deal with unemployment, but after six months unemployment is worse than ever. The Premier's (Mr. Hogan's) explanation is that the sole cause of the unemployment problem is the adverse trade balance. One million pounds of the imports were clothes, and in this the workers themselves were the guilty parties. For a working man to wear imported clothes is sheer stupidity.

For "sheer stupidity" this would be hard to beat, for during the year 1925-26 the total factory production for Australia amounted to £400,342,392, while wages were £86,724,683. It should be obvious, even to Mr. Hogan, that if the workers bought Australian goods with all their wages, a surplus of £313,617,710 would remain for the employers to sell. In spite of the inroads upon this by our masters, there still remains a surplus that must be disposed

of in the markets of the world. But production the world over has outstripped all markets, hence the glut and world-wide unemployment.

One of Mr. Hogan's supporters, Mr. Hayes, has another view. He says that the failure of past (Nationalist) Governments to give consideration to the problem of unemployment was the cause of so many being out of work to-day. Yet in Queensland, where a Labour Government has been in power for twelve years, unemployment has been so bad that it has been found necessary to increase the contributions to the unemployment insurance fund.

A few weeks ago the Nationalists routed the Labour Party in New South Wales, and the workers were told that a time of prosperity was in store for them; since then the police have dispersed the unemployed with batons. Nationalism hold sway in South Australia, where 2,000 railway workers have been put off by the Government to swell the already swollen ranks of the unemployed.

There are many who think the present conditions are transitory, and that with the further development of Australia they will improve; but they are doomed to disappointment. Capitalism here is developing hot-house fashion. The Flinder's Lane wholesalers, whose name a few years ago was synonymous with solidity, to-day find themselves in a financial quicksand through the development of the departmental stores. The establishment of large industrial concerns from England and America is making for the most scientific methods of production, with the consequent crushing out of the small and inefficient factories and the reduction of those employed.

But the most glaring instance of the displacement of labour by machinery is in the farming industry. The cry of those who formerly had an easy solution for unemployment by advising the workless to go to the country instead of hanging round the cities, has a fitting answer in the following figures from *The Age*, 23/2/27:

"In 1915-16, 213,719 individual farmers employed 259,409 persons, farming 28,883,364 acres, which produced crops valued at £75,475,427. In 1924-25 the number of individual farmers had decreased to 207,046, a reduction of 6,673, and the number of employees had fallen to 219,917, or 39,492 fewer than in 1915-16.



"The acreage farmed 1924-25, however, was 33,156,308, an increase of 4,272,944 on the acreage of nine years previously, and the value of the produce was £107,096,393, which was £31,620,966 more than the value of the crops in 1915-16."

Since then the Production Bulletin No. 20 gives the number of displaced farm hands, 1924-25 to 1925-26, as 15,255.

*The Age* proceeds: "... and, as this machinery has been invented to meet the special requirements of Australian farmers, it is enabling them to produce more with a gradually decreasing volume of paid labour ... Factories are making for the farmers machinery ... To the employees in these factories farmers sell their produce in the best market in the world. Prosperity is interdependent; prosperity is mutually shared."

This effusion is put forth as if it were a truth so rare that it would be sacrilege to doubt it. *The Age* conveniently forgets about the 39,492 farm workers while it talks about prosperity for the implement workers. But is the implement worker in as enviable a position as *The Age* would have us believe. The implement making industry is already being carried on "with a gradually decreasing volume of paid labour," as the following figures from the Commonwealth Year Book will prove:—

From 1915 to 1924-25, percentage of increase of employees was 53.49 per cent., while in the same period the total production rose by 152.67 per cent., and the year 1923-24 to 1924-25 saw the enormous increase of £149,701 with a reduction of 49 employees.

Thus we see the object of Capitalism is to increase the output with a constantly diminishing number of employees. Such a condition of affairs may be satisfactory for those who own the means of wealth production, but to the wage slave it means misery and ruin. And all the noise of the workers, employed or unemployed, the protests, the shouting, "We want work," the street processions, the deputations to Slipper-tongue, the Premier, who will either turn them away with soft words or the policemen's club, will not alter the economic laws of Capitalism.

While the working class is content to support Capitalism, it is getting the only possible result. There is only one course, and that—to understand that the gigantic

means of production, which the workers operate to turn out wealth in abundance, must become the common property of society, to be used in the interest of the whole of society instead of in the interest of the Capitalist class as at present.

J. S.

### THE GREAT DIFFERENCE.

Being a verbatim report of a conversation on a Tube platform between a youth of 18 and another of 21, upon a highly technical and abstruse subject.

The Younger: "What's this about Ilford, Bill?"

The Older: "Why, the blinking Conservative has got in again."

The Younger: "Oh, but what is all the excitement? What does it mean, 'Ilford Election Sensation'?"

The Older: "Well, the Tory has got in but the majority is about 10,000 down."

The Younger: "Did you vote, Bill?"

The Older: "No! I wasn't old enough when the register was made up."

The Younger: "I don't know a great deal about politics, Bill. What is Conservatism?"

The Older (after profound thought): "Conservatism? Why, it's the Nobs, that's what it is, it's the Nobs."

The Younger: "And what o' Liberalism, Bill?"

The Older: "Liberalism? Well, they used to be for Labour, see, before the Labour Party came in, but now the Labour Party is in, they ain't so much for Labour now."

The Younger: "And the Labour Party, what do they stand for?"

The Older: "Well, the Labour Party, they're all for the working man, see. Take your own case, for example, you're working 44 hours a week, ain't you. Now, then, if the Labour Party hadn't been in you would have been working 48."

The Younger: "I see! The Labour Party go all out for the working man, eh!"

The Older: "That's it. Besides, my father has always been for Labour and I reckon what's good enough for him, is good enough for me."

The Younger: "Oh, yes! That's about right, Bill. Hullo! here's our train."

W. T. H.

### SAKLATVALA ON SOCIALISM.

Mr. W. Graham recently moved an official Labour Party amendment in the House of Commons, setting forth his party's views on what they are pleased to call "socialism." Mr. Saklatvala, for the Communist Party of Great Britain, replied to Graham and told him forcibly that the State ownership advocated by the Labour Party is not Socialism at all. The Conservatives were highly delighted with Saklatvala's criticism, and the Capitalist Press was unusually generous in its praise of the Communist M.P.'s eloquence and logic.

But those who turn up Hansard (21st March) to enjoy some gems of oratory or to discover what is the difference between the Communist reformist and the Labour reformists whom they support, will be disappointed.

There are, however, some passages in Saklatvala's speech which deserve to be placed on record.

Mr. Graham outlined the growth of trusts and State capitalism and the decline of competition, and instanced the British Broadcasting Corporation and the Post Office as his party's ideal of "public ownership or socialism."

#### WHO OWNS THE POST OFFICE?

Saklatvala replied by asserting that such institutions as the Post Office are not Socialism, their "soul" being purely capitalistic whatever the appearance of their body. When he was pressed by Labour M.P.s to explain his meaning he was quite unable to do so.

The Labour Party makes the childish mistake of describing State concerns as being the property of all the citizens, and Saklatvala, as ignorant as themselves, readily admitted this. He talked of public and municipal undertakings being owned by "the citizens of a whole borough, town or city," and described the Post Office as being the property of "all the citizens of a country or nation."

Naturally it was then quite beyond his powers to explain why he did not support the Labour Party's demand for more so-called "public ownership."

The plain fact is that the Post Office is every bit as much private property, run for private profit, as is the London General Omnibus Company or Selfridge's. The

Post Office, telephone and telegraph plant, etc., are valued at about £116-million. The £116-million thus sunk in plant and machinery represents money borrowed in one form or another from private investors by this and previous Governments, and it ranks along with other items in the total National Debt. The owners of the Post Office are not "all the citizens," but the investing class, who draw their income from holdings in Government stock of different kinds. If the Government sold the Post Office for £116-million and used this to pay off part of the National Debt, the new private investors (or the same individuals) would then draw their profits from the Post Office direct as a private concern instead of receiving them at second-hand through the Government. The difference is one of appearance only.

Similarly it is the practice of Labour supporters to talk of the L.C.C. trams belonging to the citizens of London. In fact the London County Council has borrowed over £120-million to build its trams and other works, and of course has to pay interest on these loans out of the revenue from the trams, etc. These investors are the actual owners, just as much as if they held shares in a private tramway undertaking.

The Australian Governments pay more than £50-million a year in interest on the money borrowed to set up the so-called "public" undertakings which simple Mr. Saklatvala thinks are owned "by all the citizens."

#### WHY DO COMMUNISTS SUPPORT NATIONALISATION?

Saklatvala then declared that "the poor postmen working in the Post Office are no better off than men working for a private corporation or company," and again, "The nationalisation of the coal industry in one country ... may even strengthen the capitalist atmosphere and the capitalist structure of society, in which this sort of nationalisation is practised."

We heartily agree with the above condemnation of State capitalism, but cannot refrain from asking why the Communist Party, in face of it, still supports the demand for nationalisation of the mines.

#### SAKLATVALA—SYNDICALIST.

Finding it impossible to explain wherein he differed from the Labour Party, Saklatvala then disclosed that his aim is not social ownership but syndicalism, whereas our aim



is to make the means of production the democratically controlled property of the whole of society. Saklatvala wants to "secure the control of the miners themselves over their own industry."

#### CAPITALISM IN RUSSIA.

Saklatvala rashly denounced MacDonald for attacking "the one country which has achieved Socialism," and was at once asked "which country is that?"—a question to which no reply was forthcoming.

He later talked about Russia, and said: "M. Stalin's argument is that, deplorable as the industrial development of Russia is at the present time, the needs and requirements of the people of Russia make them dependent upon other countries for manufactured articles which cannot be supplied in Russia owing to the backwardness and the apathy of the working classes, who have not yet developed as far as a Socialist revolution."

As it is obvious that the "one country which has achieved Socialism" cannot be Russia, where the workers are too backward and apathetic to have "developed as far as a Socialist Revolution," we are left in the dark as to the whereabouts of this one bright spot known only to Saklatvala.

It is also interesting to note his opinion that "It is a mistaken notion to imagine for a moment that Socialism can be introduced alongside capitalism side by side, and gradually, and so on and so on. Such a thing would never happen; such a thing cannot happen." H.

#### RECEIVED FOR REVIEW.

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#### ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

F. L. Rimington (Leicester), J. Dillon (Fenton), and J. Cohen (Cheetham). Your letters will be answered in next issue.

#### NOTE.

The Reviews of two recent books published by Martin Lawrence ("History of 1st International," and "Lenin's Empirico Materialism") are held over till next issue.

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### LABOUR PARTY WARMONGERS.

During recent years the extraordinary progress of aviation has brought increasingly to the fore the question of the use of aeroplanes to defend the interests of the ruling class of this and other countries in their conflicts with each other.

In the month of March of this year the question came up again for discussion and decision in the House of Commons, and according to the *East Ham South Citizen* (April issue), a local paper issued by the London Co-operative Society, Ltd., their President, Mr. Alfred Barnes, M.P. for East Ham South, delivered a "courageous" and "eloquent" speech for the abolition of aerial warfare.

Mr. Barnes, in moving an amendment calling for aerial disarmament, and speaking on behalf of the Labour Party, said in the course of his speech—

We on these benches take up no equivocal position at all. We say without hesitation and without qualification, that the whole energy of this Government should be used not for perfecting the Air Force of the country, but how to abolish the Air Force in consultation and in agreement with other countries.

It is sometimes convenient for these Labour M.P.s to forget what their own party did when they formed the Government in 1924. Mr. Leach (Under-Secretary of State for Air in the Labour Government), in reply to Sir S. Hoare, then said—

The right hon. and gallant Gentleman wants me to define the attitude of the Government towards national defence. He asks in plain, explicit terms, are we going on with the expansion scheme? I am going to tell him in plain and explicit terms that there is no change in the policy of the Government for the time being on this matter. (Parliamentary Reports, 19/2/24, Col. 1670.)

Later in the same speech, in reply to Commander Burney, he said—

We are vitally interested in seeing that the lighter-than-air ships shall be explored, encouraged and fostered in every proper way that is open to us.

Many keen supporters of the Labour Party are loud in their denunciation of the Tory Government when the latter vote further credits for the maintenance and improvement of the armed forces, and we are repeatedly told that the Tories are insincere in their proposals for disarmament and their attempts to prevent another war.

During the same speech by Mr. Barnes he expresses the opinion of the Labour

Party of the insincerity of the Tory Government:

We believe the Government are not sincere in their proposals for disarmament. I should be sorry, on an occasion like this, to judge the sincerity of any person or group of persons or party, but I do think that in human affairs we must judge the sincerity of people by their deeds, and I do not think that anyone who looks back on the post-war period and considers the approach to universal peace can be proud of the record of the present Government during its three years of office.

This sentimental slobbering is patently dishonest. He cannot be ignorant of the action of the Labour Party when in office in 1924. Let us turn to the Parliamentary Reports for 19/2/24. During the course of the debate on air defence, a Liberal, Captain Wedgwood Benn, observed—

In the first place, I understand the Government to accept this Resolution. It surprises me, although I applaud it, that they are prepared to go on with the programme which the right hon. Gentleman initiated. That was stated in terms by the Under-Secretary. I think they are right, although I am surprised, because the Labour Party only six months ago pledged themselves in the Conference to oppose it. (Col. 1680.)

A most unpleasant way, to be sure, to remind the Labour Government of their deliberate decision to continue the programme laid down by the previous Conservative Government. Mr. Thurtle (Labour M.P. for Shoreditch) confessed to a certain amount of misgiving at the decision of the Labour Government towards the Air Force. He said—

I did think we might expect from the Labour Government that, in whatever other things they might compromise, there would be a certain firmness of principle in regard to this matter of disarmament. We are told they are to stand by the programme which has been laid down by the past Government. There is, in my opinion, no justification whatever for a Labour Government, pledged as the present Treasury Bench is pledged to the principle of disarmament, taking up an attitude of that kind. As I look at the Treasury Bench I imagine there must be a number of uneasy consciences on it. (Parliamentary Reports 19/2/24, Col. 1698.)

The Labour M.P.s, just like the Liberal and Tory, are fearful of the consequences should another war be declared. They dread the uprising of the working class, dread the possibilities of revolution, a movement for the overthrow of Capitalism. Says Mr. Barnes—

Aerial warfare will inevitably lead to widespread revolution, such as we have not hitherto experienced, and that, indeed, should such a war occur, civilisation must come down in

chaos before any military conclusion has been reached. (Same paper.)

A gentleman, a recent addition to the ranks of the Labour Party—Commander Kenworthy—also had misgivings. He delivered himself during his oration of the following gem:—

If the peoples of Europe are again to experience the horrors of modern, scientific aerial warfare in an intensified form, I am convinced they will rise in sheer desperation and overthrow the existing order of society. (Parliamentary Reports, 19/2/24, Col. 1693.)

On this question of air armaments, as on all other questions vital to the interests of private property, the Labour Party, like the other two parties, continue to support the armed forces which are necessary for the maintenance of Capitalist interests.

C. F. C.

### THE ATROCITIES OF PEACE.

A shareholder at the annual meeting of the London and North-Eastern Railway Company told a painful story of the pitiful condition which exists among his unfortunate fellow holders of shares. "He knew women who had to work initials on handkerchiefs because they had got no return on their capital invested in this company" (Star, March 2nd).

The horrible position of these unfortunate women "who had to work" because they got no return on their capital, cannot fail to rend the hearts of the millions of working men and women who "have to work" because they do not own any capital in this or any other company. H.

### BOUND VOLUMES

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**OFFICIAL NOTICE.**

All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 17, Mount Pleasant, London, W.C.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable. The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

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**The Socialist Standard,**

MAY,



1928

**Our 24th Annual Conference.**

The best attended and generally the most helpful Annual Conference held for many years! Such was the opinion expressed on all sides. Next year we want to see more provincial delegates, as these are occasions when all, near and far, should make the utmost efforts to attend. The following are some of the outstanding features of the Conference:

A report was presented by the official engaged in maintaining communications with parties abroad similar to our own. Comrades in Austria are engaged in spreading our principles and a translation into German of our pamphlet "Socialism" is well under way.

**AUSTRALIA.**

A party has been formed which subscribes to the Object and Declaration of Principles of our Party. Readers of the SOCIALIST STANDARD are being referred to the Secretary of this Australian Party, with whom they are asked to get into touch and so hasten the growth of a strong, virile fighting wing of the Socialist International. Their activities will be eagerly watched by our comrades over here.

From Canada and U.S.A. reports were given of groups who are making strenuous and untiring efforts towards the formation of a party in line with ours. Speed the day! is our message.

We were also told of efforts to get in

touch with readers of the STANDARD in India, Egypt, South Africa, South America, Japan and China, and Russia. To all these scattered revolutionaries the Conference extended fraternal greetings and the hope for the early birth of the Socialist International.

**PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS.**

The desire on the part of the majority of the London Branches to contest the next General Election is being met by the inauguration of a Parliamentary Fund. All sympathisers are asked to forward their contributions without delay.

**PUBLICATIONS FUND.**

The need for fresh party literature was expressed by many of the delegates. In order to meet this need funds are urgently needed.

**NEW HEAD OFFICES.**

Negotiations have been entered into with the view of taking over a large and suitable building in a main thoroughfare on the south side of the river.

The building contains a hall for indoor meetings and the E.C. strongly recommended the Conference to support their endeavours to their utmost.

For many years the party has been handicapped by lack of room. The present opportunity is one which, if taken advantage of, should mean a great step forward in the party's activities. Again, therefore, all who can are asked to forward contributions or offers of loans to the Head Office for this purpose. The amount promised and collected to date is over £63.

**PROPAGANDA.**

This was well maintained. Indoor meetings in London broke all records and provided our speakers with good opportunities to place the party's position before large and attentive audiences. Good work has also been done in Manchester, with an encouraging effect on the Manchester members.

During the summer season it is proposed to organise propaganda meetings at places within 30 to 50 miles of London.

All sympathisers of the party within this radius are invited to communicate with H.O. with a view to making the necessary arrangements for such meetings with the object of forming branches of the party in their localities.

On Good Friday evening, following our usual custom, a Reunion and Dance and Concert were held. These were the best attended for many years.

**THE BALLOT OR THE BARRICADE?**

A correspondent writes asking questions as to the need for the Socialist movement to make use of methods of violence. Here is his letter:—

East Street, S.E.

To the Editor, SOCIALIST STANDARD.

I wish to put some questions to the S.P.G.B., and hope you will answer them in an early issue of the S.S., as there are several sympathisers of the S.P.G.B. resident in Bermondsey who await your reply with considerable interest. Now, for my questions.

1. You say in your "Declaration of Principles" that the S.P.G.B. is out to conquer Political Power, etc. Now, as the Party disavows "Violent methods," how are you going to do it?

It seems to me, that by this disavowal the Party cannot claim to be "Revolutionary" in any sense of the word, nor Marxian, either. Marx, in his "Address to the Communist League," insists that the workers "must prepare for the bloody struggles that lie ahead of them." Engels also says much the same in his "Revolutionary Tactics." Lenin, in his "State and Revolution," page 25, says, "We have already said above, and shall show more fully at a later stage that the teaching of Marx and Engels regarding the inevitability of a violent revolution refers to the Capitalist State—it cannot be replaced by the Proletarian State (the Dictatorship of the Proletariat) through mere withering away, but, in accordance with the general rule, can only be brought about by a violent revolution." See also "Hymn of Praise" sung in its honour by Engels, and fully corresponding to the repeated declarations of Marx, in the concluding passages of the "Poverty of Philosophy" and the "Communist Manifesto" with its proud and open declarations of the inevitability of a violent revolution. Lenin, himself, said, "The substitution of a Proletarian State for the Capitalist State is impossible without a violent revolution." (Page 26 Ibid.)

2. My own point of view is as follows: Assuming that the whole of the working-class voted the Socialists into "Office" or "Power," it is in the power of the oligarchy to refuse to let the workers' Socialist representatives take their "seats," and declare their election to have been gained by fraud, etc. Assuming this to have taken place, the Socialists could only contest the legality of the election in the Courts. The Courts being dominated by capitalists the result would be a "foregone conclusion," the workers would then have to appeal to force of arms.
3. As the S.P.G.B. has opened an Election Fund, with all that is implied by Election Funds, how is this going to bring about a speedy termination to the present system of exploitation?

I have written this under the impression that although anti-Socialist papers like the "Herald,"

"Sunday Worker," and "The Communist," etc., often ignore letters and criticisms, the SOCIALIST STANDARD always gives a straightforward reply to relevant questions, etc.

I remain, Yours faithfully,

ROBERT CHAPMAN.

**IS VIOLENCE REVOLUTIONARY?**

It will be seen that our correspondent starts off by assuming that revolution implies violence, and that since we do not advocate violence, therefore we are not revolutionary. This is an assumption which will not bear examination. The Socialist Party aims at changing the foundation of society, at replacing the private ownership of the means of production by common ownership. It is therefore a revolutionary party. Conversely, the use of violent methods to secure minor reforms does not turn a reformist party into a revolutionary one. The use of violence by the suffragettes in pre-war days did not entitle them to be described as revolutionary; they were not seeking to revolutionise society. The American miners on strike at Herring, Illinois, a few years ago, who used machine guns against the employers' armed strike breakers, were only resisting a wage decrease; they did not want to overthrow Capitalism, and were not revolutionary.

**VIOLENCE, WHAT FOR?**

On looking closely into our correspondent's statements and quotations, we see that he has himself not troubled over much to define precisely what is the object of the methods of violence advocated by him. The Socialist Party lays it down that Socialism pre-supposes the conquest of the powers of government and the conversion of the machinery of government, including the armed forces, from "an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation." We lay it down, further, that the vote is the only means open to the workers in developed Capitalist countries to conquer the powers of government. Mr. Chapman (see paragraph 2 of his letter) says that the workers "have to appeal to force of arms," but he does not explain what would be the purpose of the appeal to arms. This is a very important point, because, having rejected the possibility of conquering the powers of government by means of the vote, he is forced into the position taken up by the Communists, and illustrated by his quotation from Lenin. That position is the setting up of a "Workers' State," based



on Soviets, in opposition to the existing State at present under Capitalist control, and the destruction of the latter by the former.

Thus we have the *Workers' Weekly* (official organ of the Communist Party) stating that, "The power of the Capitalists must be wrested from them. The workers must set up their own State" (February 24th, 1923); and again, "The workers must destroy the Capitalist State, and set up their own Workers' State, before they can make any real change" (March 17th, 1923).

Now this doctrine, shared by our correspondent and the Communists, is a piece of impractical and dangerous romanticism. It is not revolutionary. It leads not to Socialism, but to the shambles.

That it is impractical will be obvious to those who will give it serious consideration, and remember that the conduct of warfare has developed and is developing even faster than industry itself. The Capitalist State has a strongly-disciplined regular army, possessed of all the latest, most costly and most highly technical means of destruction. Mr. Chapman talks lightly of the workers "appealing to force of arms." What arms? Where can the workers get and keep and manœuvre tanks, bombing planes, poison gas and liquid fire plant? Where is the money with which to buy them? How could they learn to use them even if they had them? And, above all, will the Capitalist class permit this concentration of hostile forces and implements? It is too fantastic for words. Mr. Chapman himself exposes its colossal unreality. He says the workers would have to appeal to force of arms against the hostile decision of Capitalist courts: does he imagine that these same hostile Capitalist courts would have turned a blind eye on the rebels during the years of preparation for the appeal to force of arms?

#### LENIN'S INCONSISTENCY.

But Lenin on occasion contradicted his own Communist doctrine. Writing in 1916 (reprinted in the *Class Struggle*, May, 1919), he said:—

Socialists are willing to utilise the present Government and its institutions in the struggle for the liberation of the working class, and also insist on the necessity of so using the Government in the creation of a suitable transition form from Capitalism to Socialism.

Lenin's claim that Marx's and Engels' writings give him support in his other doctrine is fantastic. Throughout their works both of them emphasise the necessity of obtaining possession of the State machinery, and point the way to that end through the use of the vote. It is implicit in the Marxian theory.

#### THE ATTITUDE OF MARX AND ENGELS.

Our correspondent refers to certain writings of Marx and Engels. A significant point about the quotations is the dates at which the various passages were written. "The Address to the Communist League" was written by Marx in 1850; "The Poverty of Philosophy" was written by Marx in 1846; and the "Communist Manifesto" in 1847. Of the works referred to, the only one written late in life is "Revolutionary Tactics," by Engels. This is a preface to Marx's "Civil War in France," and was written by Engels in 1895. We will return later to this question of the dates of these works.

Mr. Chapman says that Engels in this preface (Revolutionary Tactics) gives support to the advocacy of violence, but curiously enough our correspondent does not quote any passage to support his claim. This is all the more curious when it is remembered that Engels devotes a large part of his space precisely to this question.

The simple fact is that Engels draws exactly the opposite conclusion, and unhesitatingly condemns armed revolt. It is impossible to avoid the belief that our correspondent made his statement without troubling to verify it from Engels' writings. Let us see what Engels says in 1895:—

#### ENGELS ON THE USE OF THE VOTE.

The Communist Manifesto had already proclaimed that the conquest of universal suffrage, of democracy, was one of the first and most important tasks of the fighting proletariat, and Lassalle had raised the issue again. When Bismarck now found it necessary to introduce universal suffrage as the only means of interesting the masses of the people in his designs, our workers were not slow to make a serious use of the opportunity, and they sent August Bebel to the first constituent Reichstag. From that day to this they have utilised the suffrage in a manner which has rewarded them a thousand-fold, and been an example to the workers of all other lands. . . . The result of all this was that the bourgeoisie and the Government grew far more afraid of the constitutional than of the unconstitutional activities of the working-class party, and came to dread the results of an election far more than they dreaded the results

of a rebellion. For here also the conditions of the struggle had been notably modified. Rebellion in the old style, street fighting and barricades, the methods that had proved universally decisive, down to the year 1848, had in effect become obsolete. (Translation by E. & C. Paul in the *Plebs*, January to April, 1921.)

Engels then goes on to show how the development of the instruments of war and the organisation of the armies had themselves, apart from other factors, utterly destroyed the possibility of armed workers overpowering or demoralising the regular armed forces.

In face of this, our correspondent's claim is astounding.

#### EUROPE IN 1918.

Now for the earlier works. Our correspondent refers to "repeated declarations of Marx in the concluding passages of the 'Poverty of Philosophy' and the 'Communist Manifesto.'" It is surprising and regrettable that he did not give us some of these "repeated declarations." The "Poverty of Philosophy" does, it is true, end up with the quotation of two flamboyant lines from a poem by George Sand, in which she referred to the choice between "Combat or death; bloody struggle or extinction." Our correspondent surely does not ask us to read into the selection of a purple passage of this kind to round off a peroration, the intention of Marx to convey a serious general lesson to the workers?

But our correspondent, in selecting these early works, has overlooked the essential point that Liberal and National movements in Europe in 1848 are not a model for a Socialist movement in a fundamentally different Europe in 1928, and, moreover, neither Marx nor Engels, then or thereafter, drew such a conclusion as he fastens on them; they never omitted to stress the importance of gaining control of the machinery of government, as distinct from destroying it.

Except France and the Rhine Provinces and England, Europe in 1848 was still predominantly feudal. The capitalist class had not yet won their way to political supremacy, and the modern centralised nation-States had not come into being. To the force of Nationalism and Liberalism was added the largely blind discontent of a working-class movement just coming to birth. Marx and Engels thought that it might be possible for the workers to take advantage of the conflict between

capitalist Liberals and the absolutist monarchies and their feudal supporters to win away the support of the State troops and rush the revolutionary movements forward to Socialism over the heads of the Capitalist and Nationalist leaders, who, of course, would not want to achieve by their revolt any such a result as that. The justifications for that error of judgment (frankly admitted to be such in later years) were many. Lack of experience led Engels and Marx to underestimate the potentialities of growth and expansion which lay in the Capitalist system. They also counted (not unreasonably at that period) on the possibility of demoralising the State troops by means of barricades and armed street demonstrations. Again, at that time there were not in existence throughout Europe, as there are to-day, either an immense administrative civil service and local government or a stable system of democratic government based on an extended franchise.

Engels, writing in 1895, candidly admits his error ("Revolutionary Tactics").

Yet upon us, too, time wrought her revenges, proving illusory the views we then entertained. Nay, history went farther than this, for the march of events served not merely to trample down our errors, but served further to bring about a complete transformation of the conditions in which the proletariat has to fight. The campaigning methods of 1848 are utterly obsolete to-day.

Engels particularly points out that even before 1848 victory of the armed workers over regular troops was "among the greatest of rarities," and that by 1895 "there have been many further changes, all in favour of the regular troops."

Since 1895, and especially since 1914, the position has changed again almost out of all recognition, and such an armed revolt to-day is ludicrous.

#### THE NEED TO CAPTURE POLITICAL CONTROL.

The "Communist Manifesto" (page 21; Reeves' edition) says: "We have seen above that the first step in the revolution by the working class is to raise the proletariat to the position of the ruling class, to win the battle of democracy."

The "Address to the Communist League," to which Mr. Chapman also refers, was an address to the German workers dealing with the actual situation facing them in Germany in 1850, and proposing methods of action to be followed before and



after the anticipated victory of the German Capitalists over their feudal absolutist enemies. It did not pretend to apply to the working class outside Germany, where different conditions existed, still less to conditions which came into existence during the following 30 or 40 years, and which, as Engels confesses, he and Marx could not, and did not then foresee.

In any event, the phrase which Mr. Chapman claims is a quotation from the Address is not to be found in the text taken from Max Beer's "Inquiry into Dictatorship," and published in the "Labour Monthly" (September, 1922).

Marx urges the workers to obtain arms and organise independently of the capitalist liberals before and during the struggles which were expected to give the capitalists supremacy, but for the period "after those struggles, during the time of their ascendancy over the defeated classes and the proletariat" he lays down definite plans for contesting elections and running workers' candidates in opposition to the democrats, and "for whose success all must work with every possible means." He deals further with the policy to be followed by the workers with reference to the budget and other parliamentary work. In this section Marx made no mention whatever of an armed struggle by the workers.

#### MARK ON THE FRANCHISE.

If further evidence is needed of the value placed by Marx upon the use of the vote for the conquest of power, we have only to remember how he worked for the winning and the extension of the franchise. The following two letters to Dr. Kugelmann illustrate this:—

K. Marx to Dr. Kugelmann.

January 15th, 1866.

We have been very busy organising a large meeting in favour of universal suffrage, and at this meeting only working men spoke. The effect was very great and "The Times" in two consecutive numbers discussed the question in a leader. (Printed in "Social Democrat," May, 1902.)

K. Marx to Kugelmann.

October 6th, 1866.

The agitation for universal suffrage here, in which I have had a large share, is growing more and more. (Social Democrat, May, 1902.)

#### LET US SUPPOSE . . . !

Then Mr. Chapman asks us to consider the situation which might arise if the capitalists destroy their own constitution in

order to prevent the workers coming into control after the winning of an election. He omits, however, to consider the effect of such a move on the capitalist system and on the capitalist class themselves. Democratic, representative government is essential to the stable and continued working of the capitalist system. It is the foundation on which rests the political machinery and its enormous and complex administrative departments. If the ruling class destroy this basis by repudiating the very means by which they themselves gained their control, they not only risk early administrative chaos, they also commit eventual political suicide, even although the move may serve their immediate purpose. It is the imperative pressure of the needs and developments of the capitalist social system which has compelled and is still compelling the capitalists to broaden the electoral basis of their control. If they cannot resist this pressure now, what chance have they of putting back the clock after further years of representative government during which ever-increasing numbers of the workers learn to use and to value the vote? The capitalist parties everywhere exploit the electioneering value of being "constitutionalists." Even the so-called dictators invariably parade the fact that they are constitutional in origin and practice; they all know the value of preserving certain legal forms and formulas. Mussolini, who came into power through the deliberate action of governments elected by popular vote on a wide franchise, so far from repudiating the elective basis of his position, has added millions to the number of electors. In January, 1925, the voting age was reduced to 25, and is now to be reduced to 21, and even to 18 for married men.

The capitalist class could not prevent this development in its infancy; they cannot now stay its growth. Every year it becomes more difficult and the consequences more dangerous to them to narrow the franchise.

But let us suppose that at the eleventh hour the minority of capitalist "die-hards" does succeed in rushing the more timid and more circumspect majority into a rash venture of this kind. The possibility is small and remote, but were it big and imminent, that would only add weight to the Socialist policy as against the policy of armed revolt. If the final struggle takes on non-parlia-

mentary forms, then it is of the utmost importance that the Socialist working class should have on its side the powerful plea that its position is constitutional. Once the working class are predominantly Socialist it is a simple matter, involving no sacrifice or material delay for them to record by means of the vote that they are the majority. Mr. Chapman wants the workers to throw away a card of so great value. If the workers are compelled to make use of their economic organisation to bring industry to a standstill, and to appeal to the armed forces to support the constitutional majority against the usurping minority, nothing at such a time could exceed in importance the possession of the backing of constitutionalism. This will strengthen them and serve to undermine and split the backing of the capitalist parties and armed forces.

In his final question, our correspondent talks vaguely about "all that is implied by election funds," but gives no inkling whatever of his meaning. If Mr. Chapman thinks that he has read in these columns or elsewhere a statement by the Socialist Party that we believe that the opening of an election fund will "bring about a speedy termination" to capitalism, I can only suggest that here again he is criticising without taking the trouble to read and understand. If he will consult our Declaration of Principles, he will see that we claim that the political organisation of a Socialist working class and their use of the vote to capture the machinery of government, and thus control the armed forces, will put them in a position to bring about a speedy termination of this system of society. If Mr. Chapman has further objections to this position, or any feasible alternative, we shall be pleased to hear it. H.

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### A TALK TO WIVES AND MOTHERS.

Don't you sometimes think that it might be pleasant if your day's work finished at the same time as your husband's—or the average working man's—even though his working day is too long?

Don't you wish you could have 1½ days "off" a week, free from the constant worry of meals and work, an opportunity to enjoy life along with your menfolk?

You cannot heave a sigh of relief when the hooter goes, even though you have worked all day. The hooter only calls you to more work when the family return to meals. Don't you wish you could leave your thoughts of work behind you at the same time as most men do?

How often are you able to fulfil the hopes of your youth and spend happy evenings with your husband? You are too tired and too busy to share his leisure time with him.

Why be content to scrape along week after week and year after year without relief from the same monotonous work when there are so many who live in luxury and yet have never worked? Surely the reward of work should be pleasure, and not misery and more work.

Has it never occurred to you that, instead of pottering about in your home all day and a good part of the night, it should be possible for the work to be done collectively (as in hotels and institutions), and the children could have large, airy nurseries and large gardens instead of the stuffy living rooms they now have.

Wouldn't you like your children to have the same opportunities as the rich person's child?

The first few years of a child's life are most important, as not only do they naturally require a lot of care, but until they are about five years of age they are not able to go out for air by themselves, and air, as well as good food, they must have to prepare them for the future. The working-class mother cannot afford to employ a nursemaid to take the child out all day, and is not allowed to keep other children at home to do so. It is only at great sacrifice that she takes a child out for about two or three hours a day, and what a rush of work awaits her return. How can children be kept in first-class condition when they are stunted for want of air, and when the mother is too busy to give them the



attention they require and cannot afford good food?

Don't leave it to the men to improve your lot. You should understand the conditions under which you work better than they. You should know what scheming you have to do to make the week's money buy what is required of it, just as other sections of workers know their own particular conditions best, the miner, factory worker, etc.

Organise yourselves. Ask yourselves why marriage and children should mean the abandonment of all your leisure and the weary, never-ending work.

Talk the matter over as to whether you cannot alter the existing state of affairs.

Wives and mothers, all women, in fact, you must not think that it is out of your reach to alter the state of affairs under which you live. You have a vote, and therefore a say in the matter as to how you should carry on. You must help to improve conditions along with the menfolk, if not for your own sake, at least for your children's. You would not like them to struggle along just as you have done. It is not enough and no excuse to say that things will not alter in your lifetime, so why bother to think about it. That has been said too long, and if those who said it in the past had given the matter more serious attention and thought of their children, we would have been nearer getting our desires now. Your husband may be in work now, but you never know for how long. Your children may also have their turn at unemployment, and, as time goes on, the unemployment throng will tend to be greater even than now.

Is it fair to bring children into such an unpromising future without endeavouring to do your share in improving their opportunities?

We all want to get the best the world can offer. Let me give you an illustration as to how you may obtain your desire in actual fact, and the illustration can be enlarged according to requirements. Suppose a number of women met and came to the conclusion that they could work better together on a large scale at specified work, and instead of each, as at present, being "head cook and bottle washer," nursemaid, housemaid, kitchen maid, dressmaker and cook rolled into one, they decided to amalgamate and work collectively, with all its possibilities. How much more airy their

surroundings could be, and how much less work there need be. It would take much less time in proportion to cook for 100 people collectively than for the same number in a number of houses as at present, to say nothing of present washing day troubles. Among the women carrying out this arrangement, no doubt some would be better at one type of work than another, so that, while some do the cooking, others do the sewing and others give their attention to the children, and perhaps have a change of work in turn. By this method the day's work could be shortened for all, and if the men must do different work from the women, they could have more comfortable surroundings to return to and a companionable wife, instead of returning home to a small, crowded house or rooms and a harassed drudge, tired of the million and one jobs she has to perform.

If all people worked to produce what all require, and each had a guarantee that they would by that means be sure of getting the necessities of life, there is no telling how soon the work could be done and what pleasures life could hold out.

Don't think that it sounds all right, but your next-door neighbour could not be trusted to do things so well as yourself, because no doubt that neighbour is thinking the same of you.

As a general rule, every mother does her best for her offspring, however much they may differ from each other in temperament. It is only the cares of life and the narrowness of it that cause us to mistrust our neighbour. At bottom, we are all bent on getting as much pleasure out of life as we can, and if we can work better collectively, the struggle need not be so hard. Most of us prefer to enjoy ourselves collectively, do we not? You cannot improve matters on your own. Do not isolate yourselves so much, but get together and talk about things with a view to improving your lot.

*Your grandmother carried on much as you are doing now. Must your children do likewise?*

Whether your family live by brains and your neighbours by muscle, or *vice versa*, both work hard, and should be alike as regards having the necessities of life. If your family consists of various types of workers, surely you do not give one less to eat than another. You give them the best you have.

Why not apply the results of work in the same manner, collectively—each have the best obtainable, each do the best they can?

This is the end which the Socialist Party of Great Britain have in view and are organised to obtain. Not a pittance, but at least a sufficiency for all.

I said you have a vote and should therefore have a say as to how you should live. Why not?

Perhaps in our next issue I will tell you what the vote has to do with your present struggle, and how voting a particular way could relieve you of a harassed life.

MRS. GILMAC.

## HERO WORSHIP.

A Conversation with a Visitor from Mars.

(Continued from April Issue).

"Now it is on the economic basis of society, Marty, that the political, legal, religious and æsthetic superstructures are reared—the mode of production in material life determines the general character of the social, political, and spiritual processes of life.\* Some fine illustrations of this fact are provided in the great work, 'Ancient Society,' by Lewis Henry Morgan, the American ethnologist. The passage I will now read to you is in itself sufficiently convincing:—

In its relation to the high career of mankind, the invention of the iron tool must be held the greatest event in human experience, preparatory to civilisation. When the barbarian, advancing step by step, had discovered the native metals . . . and produced iron from the ore, nine-tenths of the battle for civilisation was gained. Furnished with iron tools, capable of holding both an edge and a point, mankind were certain of attainment to civilisation. The production of iron was the event of events in human experience . . . Out of it came the metallic hammer and anvil, the axe and the chisel, the plough with an iron point, the iron sword; in fine, the basis of civilisation, which may be said to rest upon this metal. *The want of iron tools arrested the progress of mankind in barbarism. There they would have remained to the present hour, had they failed to bridge the chasm.*

"As I have already outlined to you, by the change from the Ancient World to Feudalism and from Feudalism to Capitalism, the industrial relations of men come into conflict with the ever-changing material productive forces, and thus, instead of helping, begin to hinder production.

\*Marx's Critique of Political Economy.

Then comes social revolution, a new economic foundation, and corresponding political, legal, artistic, and religious forms. Consequently, the history of mankind, Marty, in its broad outline, is a series of class struggles. At the present time, there remain but two classes in society—the workers, who produce wealth, and the Capitalists, who own the means of producing wealth and accordingly appropriate it when produced. The latter class, though small, is now dominant, but even as the members of this class eliminated the old feudal nobility, so the other class of society (the workers) will eliminate them. Accordingly, classes will cease to exist; the producers will then also be the possessors; in short, social ownership of the means of social production (or Socialism) is the next stage in society's development.

"This theory of history, formulated by Marx and Engels, based on the economic structure of society, is called the 'materialist conception of history,' and completely shatters the view that society depends entirely upon court intrigues and the endeavours of 'great' individuals for its development."

As I said these words, the Martian's eyes roved around my bookcase, and at length he remarked, "How is it then, holding this view of history, you yet treasure such books as 'Plutarch's Lives,' 'Autobiography of Herbert Spencer,' 'Life of Danton,' and 'Marat'?—works dealing exclusively with particular persons."

(To be continued).

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Clapham Common, 3 p.m.  
Victoria Park, 4 p.m.  
Tottenham, West Green Corner, 11.30 a.m.  
Paddington, Prince of Wales, 11.30 a.m.  
Bethnal Green, opposite Salmon and Ball 7.30 p.m.  
**Mondays:** Paddington, Prince of Wales, 8 p.m.  
Becontree, Burnside Road, and Green Lanes, 8 p.m.  
**Wednesdays:** Hackney, Paragon Rd. and Mare St. 8 p.m.  
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West Ham, Water Lane 8 p.m.  
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**WEST HAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford rd., Stratford. Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

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## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interests of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great HOLDS— Britain

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.



# THE Socialist Standard

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[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY *versus* THE I.L.P.

### OUR DEBATE WITH JAMES MAXTON, M.P.

On Wednesday, May 23rd, a well-attended debate was held at the Memorial Hall between J. Maxton, M.P., representing the I.L.P., and J. Fitzgerald, representing the S.P.G.B. Mr. Chapman Cohen, Editor of "Freethinker," took the chair. The subject was "Which Party Should the Working Class Support, the I.L.P. or the S.P.G.B.?"

J. Fitzgerald spoke for the first half-hour. He began by defining terms. By working class is meant those who depend upon the sale of their services for their living. By the capitalist class is meant those persons who buy the services of the workers. Capital does not mean merely wealth used for the production of further wealth, but wealth invested for the purpose of obtaining a nett surplus, called interest. This is the view not only of a Socialist, Marx, but also of capitalist economists like Bohm-Bawerk. Wealth is the product of the application of human energies to Nature-given material. The capitalist purchases the mental and physical energies of the workers, and after the payment of all expenses, he retains the nett surplus. The workers may not use the machinery of production—land, railways, factories, etc.—without the permission of the capitalists who own these things. The lives of the workers are under the control of the capitalists who own their means of living. The workers are a slave class—wage-slaves.

#### HOW THE WORKERS ARE ENSLAVED.

The armed forces of society—the police, the army, the air force, the navy, etc.—are

under the control of the capitalist class. These armed forces are provided for annually by Parliament. Those who control Parliament control the armed forces by which they retain control of the means of wealth production. The capitalists and their agents are voted into Parliament at each election by the workers, who form the bulk of the electors. The only way to secure the "emancipation of the workers" is, first, to obtain control of the political machinery. When the workers want Socialism they can, through the vote, secure this control.

#### IS THERE WEALTH ENOUGH?

It is not true that the means of wealth production are inadequate. In spite of a million or more unemployed and of the waste of capitalist production, markets are overstocked, and combines are compelled to limit production in almost every industry. Five firms are reported by an American Government report to control half of the food supply of the world. In face of this, little reforms of capitalism are futile. The social ownership of the means of wealth production is the only remedy and can be secured only by the workers taking control of the political machinery.

#### WHERE DOES THE I.L.P. STAND?

I.L.P. leaders, at times, deny the existence of the class struggle. Keir Hardie and Ramsay MacDonald both did this.

#### MR. MAXTON'S CASE.

J. Maxton said that he was disappointed because he felt that he entirely agreed with the case put forward by his opponent. This



statement of Socialist first principles was unassailable. The definitions were clear and correct. He accepted absolutely the diagnosis given. The workers accept capitalism and believe that the capitalists are a superior and necessary class. The only remedy is for the workers to awaken to the loss they suffer in being deprived of the necessities and luxuries of life. The problem before the Socialist is to awaken the worker to his subject position in society. The justification for this debate is that it may help towards this awakening and also that it may help towards achieving unity of working-class forces.

#### POINTS OF DIFFERENCE.

He had great difficulty in finding points of difference. Mr. J. Fitzgerald had quoted certain leaders of the I.L.P., but he, Mr. Maxton, held that he is the present leader of the I.L.P. and could speak on their behalf. It was not fair to quote against him statements made by someone else in 1902. He did not believe in those statements quoted. He fully accepted the theory of the class struggle and the necessity of basing Socialist tactics on that theory. He definitely repudiated the application of biological theories to politics and social questions.

The first necessity of an effective working-class organisation is the possession of a clear aim and policy. He and his opponent are equally doing the necessary propaganda. He denied that any Socialist organisation had done propaganda work equal in quality and quantity to the I.L.P.

#### I.L.P. PROPAGANDA.

Socialist propaganda must be delivered in a way understandable by the average worker. This the I.L.P. had done. It must be related to the circumstances of the ordinary worker's life. The I.L.P. had pointed out to the workers the outstanding evils which are the effects of capitalism, but they did not believe that by these means they were abolishing capitalism. Psychologically that is the sounder method of approach to the workers, to awaken them to the realities of capitalism. But propaganda is not enough. The way to freedom is by the capture of political power. He and his opponent agreed on this also. He, however, thought there might be a point of difference. The I.L.P. said that it was necessary to start now capturing political

power. It was needful to gather together into one great organisation—the Labour Party—all working-class organisations. To this end the I.L.P. fought elections, challenging all capitalist candidates. Year by year they had increased in representation in the House of Commons. To-day there are far more representatives of the working class than ever before. He challenged contradiction on that. He agreed that a working-class party must have no other object than the establishment of Socialism. The I.L.P. seeks to induce the Labour Party to accept Socialism as its object. They wanted to give the Labour Party a clear majority in the House. All of this kind of work went on side by side in the I.L.P.

#### THE LABOUR PARTY AND SOCIALISM.

The I.L.P. has formed the Labour Party and got it to accept Socialism. It was now the task of the I.L.P. to lay down these steps to be taken to secure Socialism. This was the purpose of its "Socialism in Our Time" policy.

He cast no reflection on any working-class organisation. He appreciated the Fabians, the S.P.G.B., and also the Communist Party.

#### FITZGERALD REPLIES.

He pointed out that while Mr. MacDonald applied the theory of uninterrupted evolution to society, the son of Charles Darwin had shown that the Marxian view of social development by revolution is correct.

The debate was not between two individuals but between two parties. Mr. MacDonald only this year had written that poverty is largely the result of the pressure of population on the means of subsistence. This was untrue when Malthus said it in the eighteenth century, and is untrue to-day.

Right from its inception the I.L.P. had urged the workers to put political power into the hands of the capitalist class.

In the "New Leader" for April 13th Mr. Maxton said that he wanted to narrow the gulf between rich and poor. The Socialist wanted to abolish the gulf, not to narrow it. The I.L.P. wanted to abolish the conception of master and servant, but so do the Liberals. Capital—admitted by Mr. Maxton to be the means of robbing the workers—cannot be "communally owned," as is the object of the I.L.P. For

35 years, in Mr. Maxton's words, the I.L.P. had fought for the living wage—and had not secured it.

#### THE I.L.P. PROGRAMME.

The I.L.P. had recently run a competition for a Labour programme in the columns of the "New Leader." One part was a minimum wage low enough not to bring Press opposition. This programme did not even refer to Socialism. It proposed nationalisation with compensation.

#### THE WAR.

The War in 1914 brought to a focus the difference between the I.L.P. and the Socialist Party. In August, 1914, the S.P.G.B. declared plainly that the War was a capitalist war, in no way involving interests of the working class.

In August, 1914, in the "Labour Leader" Keir Hardie spoke of "our interests as a nation" being at stake. We, the workers, had no interest. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald in Parliament offered to support the War if the nation were in danger.

#### MR. MAXTON REPLIES.

He could this time say that he faced points of difference, but he would repeat that he looked to the future, not the past. The statements quoted did not controvert the statement that the I.L.P. stood definitely against the War. He would challenge anyone to question his attitude or statements during the War. He was prepared to defend his own position. It must be common knowledge that Ramsay MacDonald is just as critical of the I.L.P. as Fitzgerald is, and the points he criticises are just the same. The I.L.P. wants Socialism, but what the workers want is a living wage. The fact that capitalism cannot provide this is the biggest propaganda point against capitalism.

#### THE GULF BETWEEN RICH AND POOR.

In speaking of the narrowing of the gulf between rich and poor, he said, "narrowing to vanishing point"—this was not reported in the "New Leader." He denied that the Liberal Report asked for the abolition of the status implied by the terms master and servant. In Socialism, as the I.L.P. understood it, there would be no exploitation. He admitted that the word capital was carelessly used in the declaration of the objects of the I.L.P., but the workers are not interested in the splitting

of hairs. He, Mr. Maxton, had himself carelessly talked of the public ownership of capital when he should have said the public ownership of the means of wealth production. But it is of no importance in the real work of Socialist education.

#### PRACTICAL WORK.

The I.L.P. devotes its time to the practical work of building up an effective machine for the establishment of Socialism. The S.P.G.B., in laying down its general principles, was only saying something which would be agreed with by every member of the Parliamentary Labour Party from MacDonald downwards. The difference only begins when it is a question of practical work. The S.P.G.B. refuses to face up to its responsibilities. Socialism is a question of human will and human organisation. Socialism can be attained by violence or by the "inevitability of gradualness." All depends on human will and human intelligence. It depends not on any god or other power outside ourselves.

#### FITZGERALD CONCLUDES.

He was not responsible for incorrect passages of Mr. Maxton's speech quoted in the "New Leader." The S.P.G.B. expelled those of its members who supported the War. The I.L.P. did not deal with its leading members who supported the War. When the I.L.P. misuses the word "capital" it misleads the working class. Of the 154 Labour M.P.s, 106 are members of the I.L.P., and the I.L.P. cannot therefore condemn the Labour Party without at the same time condemning itself. Under Socialism there is no question of remuneration. Money is a feature of private property systems. With Socialism it will not be needed. Where there is plenty for all there is no question of remuneration, equal or otherwise.

The final point was that any Party which urges the workers to place power in the hands of the master class is betraying the interests of the workers.

#### MR. MAXTON WINDS UP.

Mr. Maxton gave a blank denial to the charge that the I.L.P. has supported, or is supporting, the enemies of the working class. Never has the Party supported other than Labour and Socialist candidates. He gave that on his personal word of honour. He had heard that there had been friendly



understandings between Labour and Liberal candidates, but he had also heard the denial of these statements.

But again he would urge that stirring up garbage was no work for Socialists. Since 1911, when he commenced his active work, there had never been any bargaining.

He agreed that the I.L.P. had not expelled dissentient minorities except in one or two very extreme cases. But there must be immense toleration if we are to succeed in organising the working class. There must be give and take. In view of the time it takes to make a Socialist, we must not fling a man out for his first mistake. It was the choice between being a narrow sect and being an effective organisation. When Mr. Maxton made mistakes he wanted to be treated tolerantly and he would give others the same toleration. Expulsion must be used only in the most extreme cases. The greatest problem is not to get a few men with a narrow view of Socialism, but to get millions with a great determination and as much knowledge as can be given in the time available. He believed that the time is short before the majority make up their minds to have Socialism. The work rendered by the I.L.P. in the past has been a good and valuable contribution to the building up of the Socialist movement. The I.L.P. will play an important part in achieving Socialism, a work not for the I.L.P. or the S.P.G.B., but for the workers of the world.

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## BALLOT OR BARRICADE AGAIN.

MR. CHAPMAN TRIES ONCE MORE.

East Street, S.E.17.

To the Editors of the "Socialist Standard."

(1) I am writing again to the S.S., in the first place to admit that I made a mistake re Engels' work, "Revolutionary Tactics." I was quoting from memory, and in doing so I realise that I was "skating on very thin ice." However, Engels does give the support I claim in another of his works, which I will quote.

(2) H. says (page 139 of May issue, S.S.) "That after 1848 neither Marx nor Engels then or thereafter drew such a conclusion as he (I) fastens on them" (Column 1, page 139). This is not true! Engels in his article "Concerning Authority," written in 1873, and published in "Plebs," Jan., 1923, writes as follows (page 27):—"It (a revolution) is an act whereby a part of the population enforces its will upon the rest of the population—enforces its will by rifles, bayonets and big guns." Also Engels says: "The party that gains the victory must maintain its dominion by virtue of the terror which its weapons inspire in the hearts of the reactionaries."

(3) The phrase I claim to be in Marx's Address to the Communist League, was slightly altered, but really means the same thing. I hope H. will not quibble over a word. Here is Marx's phrase, verbatim, from "The Labour Monthly," Sept., 1922 (page 142): "It is a matter of course that in the future sanguinary conflicts, as in all previous ones, the working men by their courage, resolution and self-sacrifice will form the main force in the attainment of victory." Further on (same page) Marx says: "Far from opposing so-called excesses and making examples of hated individuals, or public buildings to which hateful memories are attached, by sacrificing them to popular revenge, such deeds must not only be tolerated, but their direction must also be taken in hand." It is obvious that Marx himself took "violence" to mean "revolution." I now challenge H. to state if he has any knowledge of any revolution that involved the total transformation of property-relations, that has taken place without violence?

(4) Re Marx and the Franchise. Marx says: "The universal suffrage had served its historic purpose. The majority of the people had passed through an instructive stage of development to which the suffrage, in a revolutionary epoch, had supplied the materials. It had to be ended either by revolution on reaction" ("Inquiry into Dictatorship," Max Beer, "Labour Monthly," August, 1922, page 118). Max Beer (same page, next paragraph) says: "Marx particularly points out that universal suffrage 'weakened the energy of the French people by habituating them to legal triumphs instead of revolutionary ones.'" (5) Re the early dates of those works of both Marx and Engels, are they, together with their economic writings, out of date, or is this a non-sequitur? I should like to be enlightened on this point.

(6) As to the constitution: Does H. imagine it to be some mediæval parchment like Magna Charta, hidden away in some museum or the Record Office, or is it only the "mode of

government" in vogue to-day, which all "Socialists" regard as a sham "democracy"? If H. means a tertium-quad by constitution, will he condescend to explain?

(7) Regarding the vagueness of my final question: In view of Marx's declaration given above that "Universal suffrage has served its historic purpose," then why waste time in opening election funds, and electing candidates into an utterly useless institution?

(8) According to the Logical Law of the Excluded Middle, the S.P.G.B. is either Marxian or non-Marxian. Now! (1) Marx advocated Violence. (2) The S.P.G.B. does not advocate violence, therefore (3) the S.P.G.B. is a non-Marxian party.

(9) Finally, to use an apologue, I am not like the man who lived in a garret, and whilst playing with an eighteenpenny box of chemicals, thought he had solved the "riddle of the universe." I am ready to learn and study the "new Socialism" if the Socialism of Marx and Engels is out of date.

I now close, thanking H. of the S.S. for his answer to my first letter, and for keeping the discussion free from abuse.

I remain, Yours faithfully,

ROBERT CHAPMAN.

(10) N.B.—As to the letter H. quotes from Marx to Kugleman of Jan. 15, 1866, it was published long after Marx's death. Marx hated the "Social Democracy," and in his "Criticism of the (Gotha) Socialist Programme" of 1875 (published in the "Neue Zeit," No. 18, 1890-1), Engels in his introductory notes (pages 3 and 4 of "Socialist Programme") admits that he has deleted several harsh and acrimonious phrases used by Marx. This criticism teems with Marx's scorn for "Democracy," and on page 12, he says: "May we not, from the mere fact that the representatives of our Party have been capable of so gross a departure from the view generally accepted by the Party, deduce with how much levity they have set to work upon drafting this compromise programme!" All this shows that Marx had a strong bias against the ballot.

## OUR REPLY.

Mr. Chapman, abandoning several of his quotations, presents some more. Before dealing with them, it seems to be necessary to remind our correspondent that a policy is not proved to be sound because Marx or someone else said so. It is sound only if it is appropriate to the object in view, the obstacles to be overcome and the means available for overcoming them. Therefore, while it is necessary to correct Mr. Chapman's misquotations "from memory," it would be much more useful if discussion were confined to the important question of the proper policy to be applied by the workers here and now.

In paragraph 2 Mr. Chapman quotes passages from Engel's writings showing that

Engels advocated violence. These passages (he says, prove that what I wrote (in the May S.S.) "is not true." Those who do not refer to what I did write will suppose that I denied that Engels advocated violence. Mr. Chapman takes half of a sentence of mine, puts a full-stop where I had a semi-colon and omits entirely my words indicating what was the conclusion that Marx and Engels "never drew." The words Mr. Chapman omits follow directly on those he quotes, and were as follows: "They never omitted to stress the importance of gaining control of the machinery of government, as distinct from destroying it." Mr. Chapman's quotations about violence have nothing whatever to do with this policy of destroying the machinery of government as opposed to the policy advocated by Marx and Engels and ourselves of gaining control of it.

(3) Our correspondent blandly admits that he "slightly altered" the quotation from Marx. I can only say that quotations ought not to be "slightly altered." Mr. Chapman completely ignores the fact, pointed out in my reply to his first letter, that the passage referred to is not Marx's advice to the workers in the struggle for Socialism, but in the struggle alongside the capitalists to raise the capitalist class to power. Marx, writing about Germany in 1850, puts his statement under three headings:—

(i) During the continuation of the present conditions in which the petty bourgeoisie democracy is also oppressed";

(ii) In the ensuing revolutionary struggles which would give them momentary ascendancy"; and

(iii) "After those struggles, during the time of their ascendancy over the defeated classes and the proletariat."

In Germany in 1850, before the rise of the capitalists to power, there was no vote for workers or capitalists, and Marx, in common with many of the revolutionary capitalists themselves, advocated an armed rising. Mr. Chapman quotes from Section (i) without mentioning the heading under which the passage appears. In section (iii), which deals with the period after the capitalists have attained power and after the vote has been won, Marx does not mention an armed struggle. He deals instead with the necessity of fighting elections. Mr. Chapman does not quote from



this section. Mr. Chapman ignores completely the fact that the capitalist class in England achieved their victory over their feudal aggressors long before 1850. A policy which was appropriate under those conditions is not appropriate under fundamentally different conditions which exist here now. We are not fighting to raise the capitalist class to power, but to raise the working class to power. (The final part of this paragraph of Mr. Chapman's letter is dealt with under paragraph 8.)

#### MARX AND THE FRANCHISE.

(4) Mr. Chapman here quotes two passages about the struggles in France between 1848 and 1850, but he does not even mention that the passages refer to those particular struggles. He fails to see that a statement made in 1850 about certain conditions which existed in France at that time, even if they correctly interpreted those conditions, cannot be lifted out of their context and applied to a quite different set of circumstances such as exist here to-day. In order to back up his misuse of the first passage, Mr. Chapman resorts to his apparently usual practice of "slightly altering" the words. Marx, referring to France in 1850: wrote, "The universal suffrage had served its historic purpose." Mr. Chapman wants to give this particular statement a general application and repeats the quotation in paragraph (7) of his letter, but calmly altered 'had' into 'has,' in order to give the impression that Marx was writing about the suffrage in general. Mr. Chapman's view that Marx in 1850 considered it impossible to be revolutionary and yet make use of Parliament is shown to be incorrect by the Address to the Communist League which was written at the same time as the passage Mr. Chapman misquotes. Marx wrote in the 'Address' as follows: 'Even in constituencies where there is no prospect of our candidate being elected, the workers must nevertheless put up candidates in order to maintain their independence, to steel their forces and to bring their revolutionary attitude and party views before the public.'

#### IS MARX OUT OF DATE?

(5) I did not say that Marx and Engels were out of date. It is not a question of date but of widely differing conditions. As I point out above, a policy which was correct in the struggle by capitalists and

workers to crush feudalism and introduce representative government, is not correct in the struggle to establish Socialism. Where Marx dealt with the policy for the latter struggle his views were extraordinarily sound, considering the relatively undeveloped conditions of capitalism on which his observations were based.

(6) The constitution is, as Mr. Chapman remarks, the mode of government in vogue. Its strength and importance do not rest on any written document, but on the needs of the existing system of society. The capitalists cannot with impunity ignore the needs of their own economic system. Mr. Chapman does not explain what he means by "sham" democracy. The fact of importance is that the voters, at least 85 per cent. of whom are members of the working class, vote overwhelmingly and voluntarily for capitalism at each election. They do this because they still believe that capitalism is the only possible system.

(7) I have already pointed out, in dealing with paragraph (4) of Mr. Chapman's letter, that this alleged quotation is not as Marx wrote it, but as it appears after Mr. Chapman has "slightly altered" it.

(8) Mr. Chapman tries to present a simple argument in logical form, and by omitting two essential points, "proves" that the S.P.G.B. is a non-Marxian Party. He says: "Marx advocated violence" and "The S.P.G.B. does not advocate violence." These are two half-truths. Marx advocated an armed struggle to help the capitalist movement of 1850, but he also advocated a Parliamentary struggle for the period after the capitalists had come to power. (See Address to Communist League.) The S.P.G.B. advocates capturing the machinery of government by means of the vote in order, among other things, to control "the armed forces." We wish to gain control of the forces which alone will make our "violence" effective should capitalist rebels use violent methods against the Socialist majority. Control of the machinery of government is the deciding factor. The violence is incidental. The lesson to be learned from the Fascist episode in Italy is not in the use of violence, but in the circumstance so often overlooked—that the Fascists became the rulers of Italy only because governments which had been democratically elected deliberately used their control of the political machinery and

the regular armed forces to place Mussolini in power.

Mr. Chapman tells us that the workers must appeal to "force of arms" against the organised forces of the State while these are still controlled by the capitalist class. He ignores my question as to how he proposes to gather, train and equip his armed forces. That doctrine is nonsense, and dangerous nonsense.

(9) It is curious that Mr. Chapman, who finds it necessary to improve upon Marx and Engels by "slightly altering" their words, should accuse us of regarding them as out of date.

(10) If our correspondent questions the accuracy of the quoted text of the letters from Marx to Kugelmann, it is up to him to give what he regards as the correct text and some evidence that his version is correct. Does he deny that Marx took an active part in the campaign for universal suffrage?

Mr. Chapman says that Marx's comment on the Gotha Programme "teems" with his "scorn for Democracy," but instead of quoting one of these "teeming" passages in which Marx "showed his scorn for Democracy," Mr. Chapman quotes a passage in which Marx denounces the programme as a "compromise." "All this," says Mr. Chapman with delicious lack of logic, "shows that Marx had a strong bias against the ballot."

So that if I say that the programme of the I.L.P. is a compromising programme, this, according to Mr. Chapman, would prove that I "scorn Democracy" and that I "have a strong bias against the ballot." Really, Mr. Chapman!

EDITORIAL NOTE.—Correspondents must keep their letters short in view of the many questions continually needing reply in our limited space.]

#### ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J. Cohen (Manchester).—Your question, "Would it be right to claim that there are individuals in society who could be called 'intellectuals,'" is too indefinite for useful reply. The term "intellectual" is used variously by different persons. Will you explain what meaning you attach to it?

H. W. R. Keeble (Catford).—Your letter received too late for this issue. Reply next month.

#### SOCIALISM AND REFORM.

Mr. F. L. Rimington (Leicester), in the course of a long letter asks several questions. (1) Would the S.P.G.B., with only a minority of M.P.s in the House of Commons, adopt any "meantime proposals" while working for the return of a majority? The answer is that Socialist candidates would fight elections as candidates of the S.P.G.B. on our programme of Socialism, not on a programme of reforms or "meantime proposals." They would be elected by the votes of Socialists wanting Socialism, not by reformists still imbued with the idea that capitalism can be "reformed" out of existence. If they or the Party adopted "meantime proposals" the Socialist electors would seek to further their object—Socialism—and thrust us and our meantime proposals aside. Possibly Mr. Rimington or other readers may be interested in the further point as to whether Socialist M.P.s would vote on particular questions arising out of capitalist administration. That would depend on the nature of the question. A situation might, for instance, arise when capitalist parties were divided for and against war. Should such a question arise, Socialist M.P.s would naturally be required to cast their votes against a course which would lead to the destruction of working-class life and health. That is a matter not for the M.P.s to decide but for the Socialist Party to decide on the merits of each case as it arose. The Socialist Party would, of course, make it clear that such action was in line with working-class interest and not based on the reasons which underlie the action of the capitalist parties.

#### TO CYCLIST MEMBERS.

All cyclists in the Party are asked to communicate with Com. Iles at Head Office, with a view to the formation of a Cycling Section for propaganda purposes.

#### ECONOMICS CLASS.

The above class is held at Head Office, 17, Mount Pleasant, W.C., every Saturday, at 8 p.m. All welcome.

#### SOUTHWARK AND LAMBETH.

All sympathisers agreeing with the Party are invited to communicate with the General Secretary at Head Office with a view to formation of a branch.

#### DERBY.

Readers and sympathisers in Derby and district are asked to write to Gen. Secretary in order to further the activities of the Party there, and to form a branch.



**OFFICIAL NOTICE.**

All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 17, Mount Pleasant, London, W.C.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

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The Socialist Standard,



JUNE,

1928

## MR. MAXTON'S APOLOGY FOR THE I.L.P.

Elsewhere in this issue we report a debate between the S.P.G.B. and Mr. James Maxton, who is Chairman of the I.L.P. Mr. Maxton insisted on treating the debate as one concerning him and his record rather than the record and policy of the I.L.P.. In view of the chequered history of the I.L.P., this was not surprising, but such an attitude of repudiating the past and present leaders of his own party is not good enough. Mr. Maxton may, as an individual, repudiate the anti-Socialist actions and principles of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, but there is only one way in which the I.L.P. can clear itself of responsibility for Mr. MacDonald, that is by expelling him.

To offer as an excuse the plea of tolerance for old comrades who "make mistakes" is an attempt to obscure the facts of the situation. When MacDonald and other prominent I.L.P.-ers supported the war in 1914, and Keir Hardie boasted of his success as a recruiting agent in Merthyr Tydfil, were these "mistakes"? (Will Mr. Maxton mention this when he speaks at the Keir Hardie Demonstration on June 23rd?) Was it a "mistake" that not one of the I.L.P. Members of Parliament voted against war credits during the war? Was

it a "mistake" that I.L.P. Members were in the War Government?

The I.L.P. cannot escape the full responsibility for the actions of the Labour Party, since it has been content to remain inside that body. In the 1924 parliamentary Labour Party, raised to office by Liberal votes to carry on the administration of capitalism, out of 192 Labour members 120, a clear majority, were members of the I.L.P. As Mr. Roden Buxton, M.P., declared at the 1928 I.L.P. Conference,

The I.L.P. in Parliament was doing exactly the same thing as the Labour Party was doing. There could be no difference of opinion on fundamental issues. The fact was that they were doing the same day to day work.

Apart from its pre-war bargains with the Liberals, the I.L.P. is still guilty of urging the workers to return to Parliament men committed to the retention of the capitalist system. Mr. Maxton is perfectly well aware that MacDonald, Thomas, Hodge, Clynes, Henderson, and scores of other Labour M.P.'s, are not Socialists—why, then, does he and his party support these men at elections? Why does the Editor of the *New Leader* (May 25th) offer congratulations to the German Labour Party on their recent electoral successes, while admitting that that party is ready to "enter a coalition with the centre," that is, with the Catholic Party, open and avowed enemies of Socialism?

In debate, Mr. Maxton admitted that, after being in existence for more than 30 years, the I.L.P. still have in their statement of their aims the absurd phrase that "capital" should be "communally owned." He agreed that capital, being wealth used for the purpose of gaining a profit by the exploitation of the workers, cannot be communally owned, but he dismissed this as being merely a loose phrase of no importance. That it is more than a loose phrase is shown clearly enough in *The Socialist Programme*, published by the I.L.P. in 1924. Under the heading, "A Socialist Policy for Industry" (page 24), we find these words:—

The present shareholders in mines and railways could receive State mines or railway stock based on a valuation and bearing a fixed rate of interest.

The object of the I.L.P. is not, and never has been, Socialism. They do not propose to abolish the right of the capitalist to live by owning and to continue the exploitation

of the workers. Their object is merely State capitalism or nationalisation, a reform which will not improve but worsen the condition of the working class. When Mr. Maxton announces his acceptance of Socialism and his repudiation of the policy of voting into power the defenders of capitalism, he is repudiating the programme, the propaganda, literature and the bulk of the members of his own Party.

**THE GULF BETWEEN RICH AND POOR.**

Mr. Maxton's continual objection that he had not done the things that other leaders of the I.L.P. had done was met by our representative with the point that Maxton's own address last month (as Chairman of the I.L.P. Annual Conference) contained proposals that could be supported by any Liberal Capitalist. These proposals were: (1) "A narrowing of the gulf that separates rich and poor." (2) "Abolition of the status implied in the terms master and servant, employers and employed, ruler and ruled." (3) "Reduction of arduous labour to the minimum necessary to material comfort and the more equitable distribution of that type of labour throughout the entire community." (4) "Land and capital must be communally owned."

A summary of Maxton's speech was printed in their official organ—the *New Leader* (April 13th, 1928)—to correct the mistakes of the daily press. When our representative drove home the point that every parson and politician talked of narrowing the gulf between rich and poor but that the socialist stood for the abolition of the gulf altogether by abolition of classes, Maxton said that their own paper had not printed the words in full, which were that the gulf between rich and poor was to be narrowed to vanishing point.

Several weeks have elapsed since his speech was reported, but no correction has been made by Maxton in their own paper. Only when challenged by our speaker did he plead that it wasn't a proper report. But the "narrowing of the gulf" idea is actually the "philosophy" of the I.L.P., as is easily shown by the Living Wage proposals upon which they spend so much time.

**THE PATCHING-UP POLICY.**

Maxton's defence of the I.L.P. was similar to the reform campaign of Lloyd

George or any Liberal or Tory vote hunter. He claimed that, as they wanted large numbers, they could only get them if they advocated what the workers wanted and concentrate on bad housing, low wages and similar details of working-class life.

That outlook is completely opposed to the Socialist case. The Socialist recognises that, however much the conditions are reformed, the real causes of poverty, unemployment and insecurity will be untouched, and the effects, therefore, always be with us.

If our programme were concerned with the reform of capitalist conditions, and, as Maxton put it, we went on dealing with one evil of capitalism after the other, then our policy would be no different to that of any Capitalist Party, and just as ineffective. We are Socialists because we realise the entire system must be abolished before the evils can be remedied.

The policy pleaded for by Mr. Maxton that we must offer the workers what they want and appeal to what is in their mind, is a justification for preaching any nostrum for the sake of numbers. Not what the workers in their ignorance think is the right policy, but what we Socialists know to be the only remedy is what we must advocate. If the workers want wars or tariffs, then the I.L.P. should advocate them, because that is the way to get numbers on their side.

**PARLIAMENTARY FUND.**

Donations received for Parliamentary Fund to date—22nd May, 1928:—

J.W. £5, P.Y. 1s., E.H. £2, H. £1, W.J.R. £1, Rimington 5s., Gilmaes 10s., C. & G. £1 4s., P.Y. £1, A.J.G. 5s., F.W. 10s., S.E.W. 5s., W.H. 5s., W.K. 1s., J.W. 1s., H. Gratton 5s., J.W.C. 2s., G.P. 5s., P.Y. 1s., H.T. 2s., S.E.W. 10s., A.W. 2s. 6d., F.W.S. 6d., F.W.S. 6d., A.H. 3s., S. Shuttler 1s., Bowley 2s., Jim 5s., W.H. 2s. 6d., W.K. 1s., F.W. 1s., S.E.W. 6s., P.Y. 2s., A.A. 1s., F.W.S. 6d., Herbert 2s., Harold 10s., F.W.S. 6d., W. Ashton £1, A.V.G. 1s., W.K. 6d., S. Killitoe, 10s. 6d., F.W. 1s., S.E.W. 1s., P.Y. 3s., A.A. 6d., F.W.S. 6d., S.E. 6d., C. Cope 6d., T. Foy 1s. 8d., Camberwell Branch £1 18s., J. M. Barr 1s., Rimington 2s. 6d., F.W.S. 1s., C.C. 1s., P.H. 1s., F.W.S. 6d., E. Preston 2s. 6d., J. Roe 1s., Camberwell Branch £1 7s. 6d., W.H. 1s., W.K. 1s., P.Y. 2s., F.W.S. 6d., C. Cope 6d., W.H. 6d., B. McD 2s., W.K. 6d., J.W. 1s., P.Y. 1s., A.F.G. 5s., Adkins 1s., Auction 6d., Zipmon, 1s., F.W.H. 2s., P.H. 2s., M.H. 1s., C. M. Sales 8d., F.B. 1s. 6d., Total £23 14s. 4d.



## THE TREACHERY OF THE LEADERS.

A correspondent sends the following questions :—

Albert Road, Hornsey, N.  
21st May, 1928.

Dear Comrade,

Having read this month's S.S. and noticed reproduced therein a letter criticising your Party, I take an opportunity of placing before you one or two points concerning the S.P.G.B. on which there is much controversial matter.

It is a tenet of your policy that Parliament is the means through which the working-class will achieve Socialism. Once returned why should your members be any more true to the workers than say labour representatives? Would not a growing Socialist Party provide plenty of scope for parliamentary position hunters who, if necessary, would emasculate your policy as has happened of late with that of the Labour Party.

When, if it should happen, the Socialist Party develops to the second party of the State all the forces at the disposal of the Capitalist class, yet in power, will be brought to bear for the suppression of Socialist teaching. At that stage the workers who have been lulled into an "all will be well in the future" feeling will find themselves faced with the alternative of engaging in a revolution for which the parliamentarism of the S.P.G.B. has left them unprepared, or of submitting to a still more stringent and harsh suppression which the Capitalist class would find necessary to use to smash the possible resistance of the workers.

Yet again, it is likely that, following the hypothesis of a growing Socialist Party, the workers at a period may be prepared in the majority to overthrow Capitalism only the fact of a Capitalist Government being in power, having been elected prior to the swelling of the Socialist Party, forces them to withhold themselves until a new general election (2, 3, 4 or more number of years may be the waiting time—Socialism by permission of Capitalists).

A bare majority of Socialists in the House of Commons would necessarily have to resort to force in order to break the resistance of the Capitalists who they are dispossessing (unless by this time the S.P.G.B. policy of "revolutionary" action has dwindled to the gradualness and legislative tinkering of the reformist Labour Party). This would entail the use of the army. The generals, officers, bureaucrats, etc., from whom the soldiers take their direct commands are drawn from the ranks of the Capitalist class and its lackeys—would they be prepared to translate a Socialist Government's decrees into action? I rather think that they would use the obedience of the soldiers, sheltered from Socialist teaching, in supporting the refractory Capitalist class.

It appears to me that the Socialism of the Socialist Party of Great Britain leads inevitably to an open and unashamed dictatorship of the Capitalist class with a further and acuter exploitation of the masses.

I trust that you can answer these points!

Yours fraternally,  
R. M. PHILLIPS.

## OUR REPLY.

(1) Mr. Phillips has read the last month's issue of the "S.S.," but appears to be quite unfamiliar with the principles of the Socialist Party. He asks what guarantee there is that Socialists would "be any more true to the workers than, say, Labour representatives," and is evidently unaware that the Socialist Party does not offer itself to the workers as alternative leaders, willing to replace the Labour Party and promising to conduct the working class to Socialism. Socialists, like other beings, cannot escape the pressure of the forces surrounding them, and there is no reason to believe that Socialists would be more trustworthy than other people, except that they at least understand the social forces and may be expected to avoid gross blunders of ignorance. If Socialism depended upon finding trustworthy leaders, in or out of Parliament, then Socialism would never come into being. The S.P.G.B. tells the working class that they alone can replace capitalism by Socialism, putting their trust in no leaders at all. The only guarantee against the evil effects of betrayal by leaders is to have no leaders. The capitalist class do not buy leaders for their brains or their ability, but because they have a sheep-like following. Socialists know what they want and how to get it, and are not followers. A Socialist membership will make their own policy, and M.P.s will not be able to "emasculate" that policy. The policy of the Labour Party has never been Socialist because its members have never been Socialist. Its past and its present policy accurately reflect the views of the majority of its members. A Socialist membership would not formulate a non-Socialist policy, and if an M.P. elected by Socialists advocated a non-Socialist policy he would lose his seat.

(2) Mr. Phillips claims that he knows what the capitalist class will do at some particular point in the future development of Socialism. We are not quite so confident of our powers of prophecy, but we can at least point to some improbabilities in his forecast. How does he know that the capitalist class, who do not suppress Socialist teaching when Socialists are few in number, will decide that it is a wise policy for them at some future date when Socialists form a large part of the popu-

lation and suppression will be difficult, if not impossible?

It is plainly absurd to suppose that the Socialist workers will lull themselves into an "all will be well in the future" feeling, if the circumstances around them are incompatible with such a feeling. Mr. Phillips does not trouble to explain why the use by a revolutionary working class of the franchise to obtain control of Parliament should unfit them to face whatever situation may arise. Conversely, whatever may be the state of "feeling" of a minority, if they are too small and powerless to resist those who control the machinery of government and have the majority behind them, then the minority has to submit to superior force and continue their work in whatever manner they consider best until they have become strong enough to take some other action. Does Mr. Phillips know of any alternative?

(3) Mr. Phillips wants us to consider the hypothesis of a working class suddenly converted in great numbers to Socialism in the short space of two, three or four years between elections. If Mr. Phillips looks round him and observes how desperately hard and slow is the work of making Socialists he would perceive that his hypothesis is absurd, even allowing for a considerable speeding up in the progress of Socialist propaganda with the development of capitalism.

But even if it should happen, would Mr. Phillips consider it sound policy to pursue a difficult and dangerous course of action only in order to save a year or two's delay?

(4) Mr. Phillips bases his argument here on two confident assumptions—both of which happen to be false. He says the "Generals, officers, bureaucrats," etc., "are drawn from the ranks of the capitalist class and its lackeys." The truth is, of course, that the great majority of "generals, officers, bureaucrats, etc.," are people dependent on their pay for their living, members of the working class like the rest of the so-called professional sections of the working class. At worst these officers, etc., would be divided.

The second assumption is that soldiers are, or could be, "sheltered from Socialist teaching." Soldiers come from working-class homes, and when those homes are pre-dominantly Socialist these soldiers

cannot possibly remain unimpressed by Socialist teaching.

And Mr. Phillips has overlooked the fact that soldiers schooled in the necessity of obedience to orders from above will not be likely to follow blindly and unthinkingly orders given to them by a section of their officers who are themselves flouting the lawful orders of their superiors, as well as defying their fellow-officers.

ED. COMM.

## SOCIALISTS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

Mr. Rimington (Leicester), asks, would the S.P.G.B. fight local elections in view of the fact that local bodies are part of the machinery of capitalist administration ultimately subject to the control of the central government? Another correspondent signing himself "Revolutionist," asks similar questions with regard to Boards of Guardians. He asks: "What actions would a member of the S.P.G.B. adopt on the Board of Guardians, seeing that these institutions exist to issue out charity, thus tending to keep the workers quiet and helping the capitalists by administering capitalist law."

Both correspondents appear to be considering this question from a standpoint which leaves out of account the reason for which the S.P.G.B. seeks to control the machinery of government, and also the method by which we seek to gain control. Our purpose and our method both invalidate comparison with the Labourites, I.L.P.-ers and Communists who at present secure election to local and national bodies. None of them has behind him the backing of a majority of Socialists. All are elected on reform programmes, not by Socialists but by reformers of various schools.

Secondly, we want control of the machinery of government, national and local, because that is essential to the achievement of Socialism. This is our reason for contesting elections. We do not invite Socialists to vote for our candidates because of the possibility of getting "something now" on either local Councils or in Parliament, but because we cannot afford to leave this machinery in the hands of the capitalist class. All candidates on local Councils are limited in two directions—by the wishes of the electorate and by the



over-riding powers of the central government. The Socialist, provided he carries out Socialist policies, is free from the first limitation. He can justify himself to the electors and retain his seat only by doing what his Socialist backers want. The Labourite or Communist elected on a reform programme, is in an entirely different position. He must please his electors, which means that he cannot consistently carry out a Socialist policy. Almost invariably he is, for instance, compelled to refrain from "wasting the ratepayers' money." The Socialist, backed by workers who understood that rates are ultimately a burden on property owners, not on workers, would be free from this and other restrictions.

The other limitation is control by the central government. While the central government is in the hands of the capitalist class it is obvious that local bodies can act only within the limits which it suits the government to impose. Here again it is for the Socialist electors to decide whether in any given issue it is better to act within the law or defy it and have their powers taken away. The important point to bear in mind all the time is that while Socialism cannot be achieved by local Councils, whether they accept or reject these laws, neither the Socialist members of such Councils nor their electors would be under any illusion. This is not true of the reformist members of local Councils.

With regard to the handing out of "charity" to the workers, "Revolutionist" appears to overlook the fact that the capitalists will see that this charity is issued (for their own sakes) whether Boards of Guardians do it or not.

Does "Revolutionist" seriously hold that starvation makes Socialists, or that Socialists cease to be Socialist when they receive "charity" from the Boards of Guardians? The problem before us is to make Socialists. The existence of a Socialist electorate is a sufficient and the only solvent of all these minor problems of action.

ED. COMM.

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## UNEMPLOYMENT.

### WE DO NOT SHIRK THE ISSUE.

"Unemployment." "Shirking the issue." These are the striking headlines of an editorial in the "Daily Chronicle" of February 10th, commenting on the debate in the House of Commons the previous day.

This article, after criticising the present Government for evading its responsibility for the relief of those affected, and having told us that Protection is no remedy, draws our attention to the "remedy" proposed by the Labour Party.

Mr. Arthur Henderson asked what the Labour Party's remedy was, "Gave one comprehensive answer—the abolition of the system of private ownership—Socialism."

This, we are informed, is not an answer to the question as to how work is to be found for the unemployed.

Then our very Liberal Editor treats us to the following: "That the question at issue is not one of ownership, but of work, production, business."

Now, short of having a copy handy of that day's Parliamentary debates, we cannot, of course, say whether Mr. Henderson used the word Socialism or not, while, assuming that he did, his use of the word is misleading. His conception of Socialism is nationalisation and has been exposed in these columns.

One becomes suspicious that the Editor of the "Daily Chronicle" knows that the Nationalisation of Industry, the object of the Labour Party, is not Socialism when he asks, "How the State is going to create employment" when the change of ownership is made?

Quite so, Mr. Editor. The State being but the executive machinery of the employing class, private ownership of the means of wealth production would still exist in the sense of class ownership.

It follows therefore that the other conditions of capitalist production would still apply, i.e., production for profit of goods that must be sold on a market before such profit is realised.

When the market ceases to absorb these goods, or does so only on a restricted scale, profits either cease or are greatly reduced. Production is accordingly restricted or stopped altogether. When this happens unemployment, partial or general, follows for the very people, the

workers, who have, by their productive diligence, produced more than the market requires.

Just when thousands, nay, possibly millions, of people are prevented from receiving wages, and consequently from being able to buy things, there are more things for sale than there are people to buy.

The reason for this being that as pointed out earlier—production to-day is for profit, not for use.

Then, with all the brazen impudence of the capitalist apologist, we are told that "The question is not one of ownership but of work, production, business."

With the development of modern productive methods and intensified machine production, along with existing class ownership in, say, the newspaper world, a surplus of workers exists that meet with disappointment continually at such places as the United Newspapers because employment at all times for all workers is not profitable.

After all these facts in our everyday experience, it is sheer nonsense for the Liberal Editor to tell us it is not a question of ownership.

Given Free Trade Liberalism, Protectionist Toryism or Free Trade Labourism, unemployment cannot be abolished or remedied while private ownership remains.

Whether the victims are relieved by relief works, benefits, or both, is the business of those who are involved, consciously or otherwise, in the defence of the private ownership of the means of wealth production.

While for workers who can see their class position through all the surrounding confusion, the remedy is the common ownership and democratic control of the means of life.

It will then be seen that this is not to be attained by supporting Liberal, Tory or Labour political parties, including any others that may be hanging on to one or the other.

The attainment of such a remedy, involving their emancipation as a class, must then be reached by political organisation and action on the basis of their class interests for the overthrow of the capitalist system.

The Party that fulfils all these requirements that is in fact the Party of the workers, the Socialist Party will, with the support of the workers arising from

their understanding, carry on to the political field for the first time the class struggle, now so blindly fought industrially over wages and conditions. J. B.

## THE INTERNATIONAL.

(History of the First International by G. M. Stekloff. Martin Lawrence. 12/6. Trans. by E. & C. Paul.)

The author of this work has written a very interesting and informing account of the International Working Men's Association, now described as the First International.

He starts out by investigating the earlier bodies such as the Communist League, which had an international character, and proceeds to show that they were the forerunners of the International. Like most of the Bolshevik writers, Stekloff paints too highly the English organisations that existed in the earlier part of the nineteenth century.

Of the Chartists he says:—

"In the middle thirties of the nineteenth century began the Chartist movement, the first attempt to create a mass party of revolutionary workers." Now this is not correct, for neither in membership nor in their objects were the Chartists revolutionary.

The conditions of the early sixties, industrially and politically, led to discussion of the need for international action among the workers, but the immediate occasion of the inauguration of the First International was the bloody suppression of the Polish rising by Russia. The first meeting took place at St. Martin's Hall on September 28th, 1864. Karl Marx was elected a member of the Committee to draft the rules and constitution, and the draft presented by Major Wolff, Mazzini's secretary, was rejected as well as that of Weston, the Chartist.

After a long and animated discussion, the draft drawn up by Marx himself was accepted. This address insists upon the importance of political action in these words: "To conquer political power has, therefore, become the great duty of the working class."

The author of this history shows the very mixed outlook of a large part of the active members of the International. Many of them had distorted ideas of the meaning of the organisation and did not appreciate the truth Marx set out in the Preamble to the Rules stating that the emancipation of the



working class must be the work of the working class itself.

In the Latin countries the followers of Proudhon advocated peasant holdings and petty enterprise assisted by mutual credit banks. They repudiated political action. The followers of Bakunin (whose numbers were large) held that political activity was treachery. All these schools of Anarchist reform reflected the backward state of capitalism in the countries where their policy was popular. Their individual outlook and objection to State interference was shown at the Geneva Congress in 1866, where the French delegates opposed an eight-hour law on the ground that it was improper to interfere in the relations between employers and employed.

A. KOHN.

(To be continued.)

### "AN ILLUSTRATED HISTORY OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION."

(Vol. I. 195 pages. Publishers: Martin, Lawrence, Ltd., 26, Bedford Row. Price 10s.)

The work of which this is the first volume is described by the publishers as the "only complete history of the Russian Revolution." The material was supplied by the Lenin Institute in Moscow and by many of the prominent men who played a part in these struggles. It contains a large number of excellent reproductions of photographs relating to the events described.

This volume covers the period from the beginning of the present century to the middle of 1917. A second volume, to be published this year, is to bring the history up to the introduction of the New Economic Policy and the effort to reconstruct Russia's industrial life.

It is, on the whole, an exceedingly readable and useful account of the forces which led up to the overthrow of the Czar's Government, the seizure of the land by the peasants and the withdrawal from the War. It is, however, needlessly inaccurate in dealing with the attitude of Socialists to the War. While Lenin and his associates retained their pathetic trust in the Second International right up to 1914, the Socialist Party of Great Britain had years before realised the non-Socialist character of that body. The British

Labour Party, like its French and German counterparts, was not Socialist and could not be expected to take up a Socialist opposition to the War. It is therefore misleading for the writers of this work to state (page 56) that the "Socialists" of Germany, France and England supported the War. The Socialist Party of Great Britain, alone in this country, took up a Socialist stand in 1914 and maintained it throughout the War. That we did so was known to the Bolsheviks.

In 1915, when the British Labour Party and its fellow-parties in the Second International refused to admit the Bolsheviks to their Conference because the Bolsheviks opposed the War, it was to us that the Russian Party came in order to secure publication of its manifesto denouncing this action and repudiating the rights of these jingoes to speak in the name of Socialism. The manifesto in question was published in the March, 1915, issue of the "Socialist Standard." H.

### SHOULD WE USE THE TERMS "FAITH" AND "BELIEF"?

"C.C." (who does not give his address) comments on the fact that Socialists avoid the use of such abstract terms as "faith" and "belief" in reference to Socialism. He suggests that this attitude is not helpful in the matter of making members, and, secondly, that these words represent real things: We "have to believe in one another to have faith in one another, to confide in one another." "Is it, then, correct or incorrect to make use of these words?"

"C.C.'s" difficulty appears to arise from his having failed to notice that these words as loosely used in popular speech have widely different meanings. If a Christian says "I believe in God," he means that he is confident that there exists a supernatural being. But if he also says "I believe in Lloyd George," he is not affirming the existence of Lloyd George. He simply means that he trusts Lloyd George and considers his political principles to be sound. The first is based not on verifiable evidence, but on what is sometimes called "faith," and as there are people who hold unverifiable "beliefs" and "faiths," then there is need of words to describe those attributes.

Socialism is not a "faith," like Christianity, and it would therefore be incorrect to describe it as such. Moreover, although sympathy with one's fellow human beings is a deeply-rooted instinct, past experience has shown that personal attraction is not the foundation upon which can be built the organised movement for the abolition of capitalism. "C.C." writes: "We have to believe in one another, to have faith in one another," but is it entirely true? Does he "have to believe" in Mussolini or "have faith" in Winston Churchill? His recognition of his class position inside capitalism prevents this. Socialists do not base their policy and actions on "belief" or "faith" in the religious sense, but on their knowledge of their class interests. The justification for Socialist principles is that they are in accordance with observed facts, and we subscribe to those principles because they show us the means of escape from the evils of capitalism from which we as workers suffer. We avoid the use of these terms because they would obscure the nature of Socialist principles and Socialist organisation.

"C. C." will perhaps have noticed that it is the practice of the Socialist Party to seek to make Socialists, not merely to make members. ED. COMM.

### HERO WORSHIP.

A Conversation with a Visitor from Mars.

(Continued from May Issue.)

"I trust your question is not actuated by Martian impishness," I smiled, "but it is easily answered. As a socialist, my friend, I subordinate the influence of any one person to the mode of production prevalent in society, but I am not insensible to the fact that men obviously differ in ability and talents. I do not deny that Newton had a great brain, or that Beethoven was a musical genius, and I endeavour to appreciate their work—the heritage not merely of these isolated individuals, but of the influences and reactions of the society in which they lived. The healthy thing to do is not to idolise these men and prostrate oneself before them in awe, but to take the trouble to hear what they have to offer, build up upon it, and recognise (as a fellow being, not as a superstitious slave) the fact that they have given of their best to mankind. As Alexander Pope says, 'The fool admires, the man of sense approves.'"

"And now, Marty, I must try to outline to you the effects of 'hero-worship' on human history, but time and the very magnitude of the subject compel me to be as brief in my descriptions as an English summer.

"Early in my remarks I mentioned the 'witch-doctor' or 'medicine-man' of primitive societies, and left you to draw the obvious inference that this individual affords the earliest example in recorded history of a 'hero.' To the savage mind, my friend, all objects that are strange, powerful, vast or invisible arouse feelings of awe and dread, and are thought worthy of veneration. Sooner or later, however, there arise men who are capable of relegating natural happenings to natural causes, and these men, alone in this knowledge, are able to take advantage of the ignorance and superstition of the tribesmen in order to obtain for themselves power, wealth and comfort. Originally working among his own circle of friends (distributing charms against 'evil' or personal enemies, and love potions, etc.), the witch-doctor—known to various tribes as the Mulgarrodock, Shaman, Biraack, Bodio, Nepu, etc.—develops into an important functionary, who administers 'magical' rites for the supposed benefit of the community. You will readily believe, Marty, that when this stage has been reached, the position becomes one of extreme danger to the holder, and only the wily impostor, experienced in the arts of trickery and fraud, utterly unscrupulous and ruthless, is able to keep the confidence of the tribe in his power to avert 'evil,' to bring rain or sunshine, or to act as mediator between the tribesmen and their gods.

(To be continued.)

### S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS

LONDON DISTRICT.	
<b>Sundays</b> ...	Clapham Common, 6 p.m. Tottenham, West Green Corner, 11.30 a.m. Tooting, Church Lane, 7.30 p.m. Victoria Park, 4 p.m. Woolwich, Beresford Square, 7.30 p.m.
<b>Mondays</b> ...	Paddington, Prince of Wales, 8 p.m.
<b>Wednesdays</b> ...	Hackney, Paragon Road and Mare Street, 8 p.m.
<b>Thursdays</b> ...	Becontree, Rodney Street, Ilford, 8 p.m.
<b>Fridays</b> ...	Clerkenwell, Almeida Street, Upper Street, N., 8 p.m. West Ham, Water Lane, 8 p.m.
<b>Saturdays</b> ...	Wood Green, Jolly Butchers Hill, 8 p.m. Leyton, Corner Grange Park, 7.30 p.m.
HANLEY BRANCH.	
<b>Sundays</b> ...	Hanley Market Square, 7 p.m. Burslem, St. John Square, 7 p.m.



**BRANCH DIRECTORY.**

**BATTERSEA.**—Sec., 2, Hanbury-road, S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns-road. Discussion second Thurs. in month.

**BECONTREE.**—Sec., Hy. Gratton, 4, Drummond Ave., Brooklands, Romford. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 7.30, at above address.

**BETHNAL GREEN.**—Communications to D. Jacobs, 28, Lyal Road, Bow, E.3.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec. E. Jesper, 38, Rollason-rd., Erdington. Branch meets The Continental Café, Moor St., 1st and 3rd Sundays at 11 a.m.

**CAMBERWELL.**—Sec., J. Goodfellow, 40, Solon New Road, Clapham, S.W.4. Branch meets at Camberwell Trades Council Room, 6A, Artichoke Place, Camberwell Green, every Friday at 8 p.m. Discussions—public invited.

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

**CLERKENWELL.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at 17, Mount Pleasant, W.C.1. Discussions first Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.—all invited. Sec., at above address.

**EAST LONDON.**—Sec., A. Jacobs, 78 Eric-st., Mile-end, E.3. Branch meets first and third Mondays in month at above address.

**EAST HAM.**—Branch meets at 1, Tyrone-road, East Ham. Wednesdays at 8 p.m. Communications. Sec. at above address.

**EDINBURGH.**—Sec., 15, Barclay-place, Edinburgh.

**HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Mondays, 8 p.m. at The Old Gravel Pit Hall, Mare-street, Hackney. Branch Business 1st and 3rd Mondays. Discussions 2nd and 4th Mondays. Sec. at above address.

**HANLEY.**—Branch meets Tuesdays, Working Men's Club, Glass-st. Sec., F. Goldstraw, 38, Paddock Street, Hanley.

**HULL.**—Branch meetings, Tuesday, at 8 p.m., at the Trade and Labour Club (Jarratt-street entrance). Discussion after meeting. All readers in Hull requested to attend.

**ISLINGTON.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 144, Seven Sister-rd., Holloway, N. Sec., M. Baker, 18, Orpingley-rd., N.7.

**LEYTON.**—Sec., A. Holland, 396, Lea Bridge-rd., Leyton. Branch meets 8 p.m., Trades and Labour Hall, Grove House, High-rd., every Monday. Public invited.

**MANCHESTER.**—Sec., W. Addison, 111, West Park-street, Salford, Manchester. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month, 7.45 p.m. at 114, Duke St., Stretford-road.

**PADDINGTON.**—Branch meeting held on 2nd and 4th Fridays, 8 p.m., in room above the Co-operative Stores, 306, Kilburn-lane, W.9 (side door).

**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Sec., J. Bird, 5 Welling-ton-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.

**TOOTING.**—Sec., 15, University-road, Collier's Wood, S.W.19. Branch meets every Friday at 8 p.m. at Tooting Adult School, 971, Garratt-lane, S.W.17.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Secretary, 18, Woodlands Park, N.15. Branch meets Fridays, Room 2, Trades Hall, 7, Bruce Grove. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.

**WALTHAMSTOW.**—Sec., S. E. Williams, 3, Dyson-rd., Leytonstone, E.11. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.

**WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107 Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at Secretary's address.

**WEST HAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford rd., Stratford. Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

**WOOD GREEN.**—All communications to Sec., F. W. Godfrey, 71, Falkland Road, N.8.

**WOOLWICH.**—Branch meets at 94, Griffin Road, Plumstead. Communications to Secretary at above address.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interests of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great HOLDS— Britain

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.



# THE Socialist Standard

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[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

## THE LABOUR PARTY'S NEW PROGRAMME. A BID FOR LIBERAL SUPPORT.

A Committee appointed by the Labour Party to draft a new programme for the next General Election has made its report. The Committee was mostly composed of members of the I.L.P., and the draft programme drawn up by them had been carefully worded to appeal to all Liberals and supporters of Capitalism generally.

The main plank of the Programme is this:

The land, the production and distribution of the coal and power which are the life-blood of modern industry, the network of communications and transport which form its veins and arteries—these fundamental necessities are too vital to the welfare of the nation to be organised and exploited merely for private profit. Without haste, but without rest, with careful preparation, with the use of the best technical knowledge and managerial skill, and with due compensation to the persons affected, the Labour Party will vest their ownership in the nation and their administration in authorities acting on the nation's behalf.

How carefully guarded and appealing is the phrase "merely for private profit." Private profit they want to keep in existence, but controlled by public bodies—that is the Capitalist State, with bondholders actually owning Government Securities floated to buy out the "public necessities." "With due compensation to the persons affected" means that the owners will receive (with more security than competitive commerce affords) annual tribute from the unpaid labour of the working class. In other words, the Labour Party preserves the existence of an owning class living upon the non-owning class.

The Programme gives illustrations from modern State-owned services to show how

similar are their proposals to the concerns run for profit to-day. One illustration they give us is the National Electricity Board established by the Conservative Government! The policy of public or State-ownership of "public utilities" can be found in the Conservative programme, and it is one of the "advanced" objects advocated in the Liberal Industrial Report. No wonder the *Manchester Guardian* says of the new Labour Programme.

The broad definition of objects will be found as acceptable, to most people outside the party as to those within it. Even when it comes to closer detail the draft contains very little which might not have been written by, say, the Liberal Industrial Committee.

How thin is the veneer of Nationalisation in the Labour Programme can be seen from this clause:

Even those industries which remain in the hands of private capitalists exist for the service of the community.

British industry, to-day, can secure the well-being for the mass of the population only if it consolidates its forces, eliminates waste, and calls in the resources of science and organisation.

The State regulation of private industry is all that this means. And the reorganisation of industry along more efficient and less wasteful lines results, actually, in industry requiring less men to produce more wealth. A larger unemployed army is the magnificent result, and greater insecurity for those employed, who are continually being threatened by new machinery and "speeding up" methods. America, surely, is the ideal example of efficient industry—so efficient that, with greater out-



put each year, fewer and fewer workers are required to run the machines, and a greater difficulty to sell the increasing output of rationalised industry.

Against this programme of private ownership and public control the Socialist advocates abolishing the cause of the slavery and poverty of the working class. The Socialist Party stands for abolishing State and private ownership, and replacing them by common ownership by the whole working community in the interest of the community of workers.

But that is not good election propaganda and vote-snaring material. Hence the Labour Party will have none of it! They appeal to "all classes" with pills to suit all classes of reformers. Unlike the Communists, we do not offer an alternative programme of scores of reforms. Our Platform is simply Socialism—which makes all reforms of Capitalism fade into insignificance and uselessness.

A. KOHN.

#### ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J. Cohen (Manchester).—Your use of the term "intellectuals" as those interested in intellectual matters such as science, philosophy, etc., does not constitute them a class as that is used as an economic classification. The use of the term "intellectuals" in the above sense is very vague and is not of sufficient importance to even classify them as a section of society. The term "intellectuals" is mostly used to refer to those who pose as the guides and leaders of the masses.

Mrs. Betts (Buckhurst Hill).—Your criticism of a "Talk to Wives and Mothers" has been forwarded to the writer, and her reply will appear in the next issue.

H. W. R. Keeble (Catford), R. M. Phillips (Hornsey), R. Chapman (S.E.17), J. Dillon (Fenton).—Your rejoinders to our replies will be dealt with in next issue.

We are proposing to publish a new pamphlet, but we cannot do so until we have the money. If we print 20,000 copies the cost will be in the neighbourhood of £100. We ask, therefore, for donations. As soon as we get sufficient to justify giving the order to our printer we shall be pleased to proceed.

#### SOCIOLOGY OF EIGHTEENTH CENTURY FRENCH DRAMA.

By G. V. PLECHANOV.

The study of the existence of primitive man confirms the fundamental statement of historical materialism, which declares that the *consciousness* of people is determined by their *conditions*. In support of this, it is enough to refer to the deductions made by Bucher in his remarkable research *Arbeit und Rhythmus*. He says:—

"I came to the conclusion that labour, music and poetry at the first step of development were blended together, but the fundamental element of this triad was labour, and the two others were of secondary importance."

According to Bucher, the origin of poetry is explained by labor (*Der Ursprung der Poesie ist in der Arbeit zu suchen*), and one who is acquainted with the literature of this subject will not accuse Bucher of exaggeration.<sup>1</sup> Refutations launched by competent people are not concerned with the fundamental substance of Bucher's theory, but only with certain secondary particulars. In essence, Bucher is undoubtedly right.

But his deduction primarily concerns itself with only the *origin of poetry*. However, what about its *further development*? How are poetry and art in general progressing in much higher steps of social evolution? Is it possible, and on what grounds, to note the existence of a causal relation between the *state of being* and the *consciousness*, between the *technique* and the *economics* on one side of society, and its *art* on the other?

We shall attempt to answer this question in this essay, and for this purpose shall treat of the history of the French drama during the eighteenth century.

It is necessary, first of all, to make a digression.

French society of the eighteenth century, from the point of view of sociology, is characterised primarily by the fact that it was a *society divided into classes*. This circumstance could not but reflect itself in the development of art. As a matter of

<sup>1</sup> M. Herness remarks that the art of primitive decoration could develop only by depending upon industrial activity, and that those peoples who, like the Ceylon Vedas, as yet know nothing of industrial life, have no decoration. (*Urgeschichte, der billenden Kunst in Europa*. Wien, 1898, Page 38.) This conclusion is similar to the one made above by Bucher.

fact, let us take even the *theatre*. On the stage of mediæval France, as in all Western Europe, the main place was occupied by the so-called *farce*. Farces were written for the people and were acted before the people. They always served as an expression of the people's views, its aims, and—what is especially necessary to note here—its discontents with the high class of society. But, beginning with the reign of Louis XIII, the farce begins to decline; it is considered as an amusement fitted only for lackeys and which is unworthy of people with a refined taste: "*éprouvés des gens sages*," as one French writer expressed it in 1625. *Tragedy* replaces the farce. But the French tragedy has nothing in common with the views, aims and discontents of the public mass. It represents a creation of the aristocracy and expresses the views, tastes and aims of the higher class of society. We will see what a deep impression this origin of class-division had upon the character of the tragedy; but, first of all, we wish to direct the reader's attention to the fact that in the epoch of the birth of the tragedy the aristocracy in France did not occupy itself with productive work, and lived by using that which was produced by the economic activity of the Third Estate (*tier état*). It is not difficult to understand that this fact could not but affect those productions of art which were arising in the aristocratic society, and which expressed the tastes of that society.

It is known, for instance, that the inhabitants of New Zealand praise the cultivation of certain native plants in their songs. It is also known that their songs are followed by a type of dancing which *illustrates the motions performed by the cultivators of those plants*. Here it is obvious in what manner the productive activity of man affects his art, and it is not less clear that since the upper class of society is not occupied with productive activity, as a result *their art—which arises in their society—can have no direct relation to the public process of production*. But does it mean that the causal dependence of consciousness upon conditions is enfeebled when a society is divided into classes? Absolutely not—for the division of society into classes is determined by the society's economic development. If art created by the upper class has no direct relation to the productive process, this also is explained by economic causes.

The materialistic interpretation of history, then, can be fully applied in this case, but it is understood that in this instance the undoubted causal connection between consciousness and conditions, between social relations—starting out on the ground of "work"—and art is not so easily disclosed. Here, between "work" on one side and art on the other, certain intermediate situations are formed which often attract the attention of scholars, and therefore make difficult the correct understanding of certain phenomena.

Having made this important digression, we shall return to our subject. First of all, we shall discuss tragedy. Taine states in his *Lectures on Art*:—

"French tragedy appears at the time when the well-to-do and noble monarchy during the reign of Louis XIV organised the supremacy of manners, of fine aristocratic surroundings, a court life; and it disappears at the moment when the nobility—and morals—of court decline under the blow of the Revolution."

This is entirely true. But the historical process of the origin and especially the fall of the French classical tragedy was a little more complex than is presented by this famous art-theoretician.

Let us examine these kinds of literary productions in their form and substance.

From the side of *form* in the classical tragedy, it should first of all be noted that the famous *three unities* were the cause of so many disputes in the memorable period of French literature which involved the struggle between the romanticists and classicists. The theory of these unities had been known in France from the time of the Renaissance; but it became a literary law, and an indisputable rule of "good taste" not until the seventeenth century. "When Corneille wrote his *Medea* in 1629," Lanson remarks, "He knew nothing about the three unities."<sup>2</sup> As a propagandist of the theory of the three unities, Meré wrote during the 1630's. In 1634 his tragedy, *Sophonisbe*, was enacted—the first tragedy written in accordance with the "rules." It was the cause of a polemic in which the opponents of the "rules" put forth arguments much resembling the arguments of the romanticists. In defence of the three unities, the learned adherents to ancient literature were armed, and they had an absolute and firm victory. But to whom

<sup>2</sup> *Historie de la littérature française*. Page 415.



were they indebted for their victory? In any case, not to the erudition in which the public was little concerned, but to the growing pretensions of the upper class for whom the naïve scenic absurdities of the preceding epoch were getting intolerable.

"Behind the unities was an idea which had to attract well-bred people," continues Lanson, "the idea of exact imitation of reality, capable of conveying the necessary illusion. In its real sense the unities represent the *minimum* of conditionality . . . Thus, the triumph of the unities was in the real sense a triumph of realism over imagination."

And thus the refinement of the aristocratic taste, increasing with the strengthening of "the noble and well-disposed monarchy," conquered. Further progressions of theatrical technique made an exact imitation of reality fully possible without the observation of the unities; but the representation of them was associated in the minds of the spectators with a whole series of scenes important and dear to them; therefore, their theory seemed to acquire an independent value, though depending on the indisputable demands of good taste. In the course of time the prevalence of the three unities was supported, as we shall see later, by other social causes, and the theory, therefore, was defended even by those who despised the aristocracy. The struggle with the theory of the unities became very difficult; in order to overthrow them the romanticists required much ingenuity, persistence and almost revolutionary energy.

Having touched upon theatrical technique, let us also note the following:—

The aristocratic origin of French tragedy also affected the art of the actors. Everybody knows that the acting of French players to this day is characterised by a certain artificiality and even a stiltedness, which makes a rather unpleasant impression on a spectator unacquainted with this fact. Whoever saw Sarah Bernhardt will not dispute this with us. Such manner of playing is inherited by the French actors from the time when the classic tragedy reigned on the French stage. The aristocratic society of the seventeenth and eighteenth century would have revealed discontent had the actors of tragedy thought of acting with the naturalness and simplicity that enthralled the audiences of Eleanor Duse. Simple, natural acting absolutely

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

contradicted all of the requirements of aristocratic æsthetics. The Abbé Du Bos proudly stated:—

"The French do not limit themselves only with a costume to add the required nobility and dignity to the actors and the tragedy. We also demand that the actors speak in a higher and slower tone than that employed in common speech. This is a more difficult manner, but it has more bearing. Gesticulation must correspond to the tone, for our actors must display greatness and ability in everything they do."

But why did the actors have to display grandeur and nobility? Because tragedy was the child of court aristocracy and the leading characters were kings, heroes and, as a rule, such "high-place" persons, who, so to speak, the duty of service obliged to appear great and noble, if they really were not. A dramatist, in whose productions there was not the required conditional dose of court "nobility," even though possessed of great merit, would never have received applause from the spectators of that period. This is best seen from the French opinions expressed about Shakespeare at that time, and through the influence of France even in England.

Hume found that Shakespeare's genius ought not to be exaggerated; unproportioned bodies often seem taller than their actual height; for his time Shakespeare was good, but he did not fit in with the refined audience. Pope expressed regret that Shakespeare wrote for the populace and not for the well-bred. "Shakespeare would have written better," he said, "had he enjoyed the protection of the monarch and the support of the court people." Voltaire himself, who in his literary activity was a harbinger of a new era, inimical to the old order, and who gave to many of his tragedies a philosophic content, paid an enormous tribute to the æsthetic conceptions of aristocratic society. Shakespeare appeared to him a genial but rough barber. His opinion of *Hamlet* is noteworthy, indeed. He says:—

"This piece is full of anachronisms and absurdities; in it Ophelia is buried on the stage, and this is such a monstrous spectacle that the famous Garrick got rid of the scene in the cemetery. This piece is rich with vulgarities. For instance, in the first scene the watchman says: 'I did not even hear the stamping of mice.' Must such absurdities be tolerated? Without doubt, a soldier speaks thus in the camp, but he must not express himself so on the stage before the selected persons of the nation—persons who talk in a noble tongue and in whose presence

it is necessary to speak not less nobly. Imagine, gentlemen, Louis XIV in his glass gallery surrounded by his glistening court, and then imagine a jester covered with rags pushing the crowd of heroes aside—the great nobles and beauties which constitute the court—and proposing that they throw up Corneille, Racine, and Molière for Punch and Judy, who possess sparks of talent, or make grimaces. What do you think? How was such a jester met?"

These words of Voltaire not only indicate the origin of the French classic tragedy, but also the cause of its fall.<sup>4</sup>

Exquisiteness easily passes into affectation, and affectation excludes the serious and meditative refinement of the object.

The sphere of choice of objects must certainly have become narrow under the influence of the class prejudices of the aristocracy. Class conception of proprieties was clipping the wings of art. In this respect the demand which Marmontel put forth in the tragedy is extremely interesting and instructive:—

"A both peaceful and well-bred nation, in which everyone thinks it necessary to adjust his ideas and feelings to the manners and customs of society, a nation where proprieties serve as laws—such a nation can allow only those characters which are softened with respect to their associates, and only such vices which are mitigated by propriety."

Class propriety becomes a criterion when valuing art productions. This is enough to bring forth the fall of classic tragedy. But this is not yet enough to explain the appearance on the French stage of a new kind of dramatic production. In the meantime, we see that in the 1830's a new literary genre appears—the *Comédie Larmoyante*, the tearful comedy, which for a time had a fairly notable success. If consciousness is explained by conditions, if the so-called special progress is in causal dependence to its economic progress, then the economics of the eighteenth century should also explain the appearance of the tearful comedy. The question is: Can it do it?

It not only can do it, but it did in part, though without any serious method. In proof we'll refer, for instance, to Gettner, who, in his history of French literature, views the tearful comedy as a result of the growth of the French bourgeoisie. But the growth of the bourgeoisie, like the growth

<sup>4</sup> We will remark at this point that it was mainly this side of Voltaire's view-point that made him so repulsive to Lessing, the ideologist who adhered to German burgher-dom. This is well explained in F. Mering's book, *Die Lessings Legend*.

of any other class, can be explained only by the economic development of society. Therefore, Gettner, unsuspectingly and against his own desire—he is a great enemy of materialism, about which, by the way, he has the most stupid conception—applies the materialist interpretation of history. And not only Gettner! Brunetière, far better than Gettner, showed this causal dependence in his book, *Les époques du théâtre français*. He writes:—

"Since the time of the failure of Lau's bank—to stop at this point—the aristocracy loses ground every day. It seems to hasten to do everything that a given class can do in order to . . . but especially does it (the aristocracy) become impoverished, while the bourgeoisie, the third estate, multiplies its wealth, and, gaining more and more importance, acquires in addition the consciousness of its rights. As one poet afterwards expressed it, in their hearts a hatred was born simultaneously with the thirst for justice. Is it possible then that the bourgeoisie took no advantage of the theatre—such a means as it was of disposing propaganda and influence; that the bourgeoisie did not take their situation seriously; did not look with a tragic view at the inequalities which only amused the author of the comedies, *Bourgeois gentilhomme* and *Georges Dandin*? And, above all was it possible that this triumphing bourgeoisie became reconciled with the constant performances concerning emperors and kings and that it did not take advantage of its increasing wealth to demand the portrayal of its own life?"

And so the tearful comedy was a portrait of the French bourgeoisie of the eighteenth century. Not incorrectly is it called the bourgeois drama. But Brunetière's view, though correct, has a too general, and, therefore, abstract character. Let us develop it more fully.

Brunetière says that the bourgeoisie could not reconcile itself with the perpetual representations of emperors and kings. This is very probable after his explanations in the above citation, but so far it is only probable; it will become certain only when we investigate the psychology of at least a few persons who took an active part in the literary life of France at that time. To them the talented Beaumarchais—the author of several tearful comedies—belonged. What did Beaumarchais think, then, of the constant representation of only emperors and kings?

Decidedly and passionately he rebelled against it. He rarely laughed at the literary rule which caused tragedy to depict its heroes only as kings and others illustrious in this world, and which, on the other hand



forced comedy to whip in people of the lower estate.

"To depict the weal and woe of people of the Third Estate! *Fi donc!* One can only laugh at these! Ridiculous citizens and unfortunate kings—this is all that can be permitted on the stage. Very well, we shall remember that."

This sharp exclamation of one of the most outstanding ideologists of the Third Estate apparently proves, therefore, the psychological attitude of Brunetière. But Beaumarchais not only desired to portray the people of the Third Estate in their unfortunate situations. He protested also against the custom of choosing actors from the heroes of the ancient world.

"What interest have I, a peaceful citizen of monarchical empire of the eighteenth century, with the events of Rome or Athens? Can I be intensely interested in the death of some Peloponnesian tyrant or in the sacrificing of a young princess in Aulis? All this does not concern me in the least; from all this I derive no significance."

(Translated by Bessie Peretz for the "Modern Quarterly.")  
(To be continued.)

<sup>a</sup> Lettre sur la critique du Barbier de Séville.

<sup>b</sup> Essai sur le genre dramatique sérieux. Oeuvre 1. Page 11.

## COMIC CONFESSIONS OF A CAPITALIST.

One would have thought that with unemployed everywhere, because more wealth exists than can find markets, more production would not be advanced as a "cure for poverty." Sir Ernest Benn, who claims to be an individualist, whatever that is, seems to think that he makes some wonderful discoveries. He informs us, in all seriousness (*Daily Telegraph*, March 17th, 1928), that:—

The wealth of nations consists of things. Poverty is the absence of a sufficient number of things.

Marvellous! What things? Whose things? And why, and by whom, are they wanted? Does mere want bring possession of these things? Have the Workers, who undeniably suffer a shortage of the most desirable things, failed to produce sufficient of these things for other people who are non-workers? Are their productive powers greater or less than their needs? In an age when millions of the population are employed uselessly from a wealth-producing

point of view, when machinery and other means of production lie idle, this "individualist" talks as if we were living in the stone age. Note this simple stuff:—

Let us try to discover what it is that people want and how far it is possible to supply these needs.

A boy or girl from a village school could tell Sir Ernest what it is people want, while even a superficial acquaintance with the achievements of the Industrial Revolution and the mechanical marvels of manufacture to-day will show that these needs could be met easily, even anticipating the most extravagant demands of the future generations. What has this great business mind to offer in the way of constructive proposals? Arithmetic and the wildest of suppositions. He says:—

Let us get straight down to our arithmetic. Suppose we set the problem like this: Let us give to some railway porter of our acquaintance another £5 a week. Let us suppose for the sake of the argument that the adult male population of the nation is composed of railway porters whose income it is proposed to increase by £5 a week (*Ibid.*)

Having supposed in this farcical manner, everything is now straight sailing into Utopia. Our nation of supposed railway porters, we are told, will want:—

Ten million houses, 10 million baths and hot-water systems, 135 million clothing outfits, 15 million umbrellas, etc.

It hardly seems credible that in a daily paper, supposed to be read by educated people, that one who claims superior capabilities could pen the following in his conclusion of a two-column article:—

All these facts emphasise the truth of the theory that the problem of poverty is not a problem of money but of things, and that if we make the things the problem disappears.

IF! Then will Sir Ernest Benn tell us why we do not make them? Will he, or anyone, show where the Socialist is wrong when we claim that these things will not be produced unless such production serves the profit of the idle few who own the means of producing these things? This insane system can be ended when a politically enlightened Working Class break the fetters of ownership by the Capitalist few in order to establish common ownership, by which means that class can at once win emancipation and abolish poverty by the ease with which they can now produce wealth.

MAC.

## WHAT IS CAPITAL?

We do not evade discussions regarding words or terms and their definite meanings. Such discussion is not, as we are told, mere hair-splitting. A term frequently misused by our opponents is the one, Capital, and there are very good reasons why those intent on spreading confusion should make special efforts to prevent the Workers obtaining correct views regarding its nature and function. To understand this form of wealth it is first necessary to realise that similar methods of production have not prevailed from all time. Those claiming that "*Capital is wealth used to produce further wealth*" draw such inference. All previous social systems may be said to have used part of their wealth for future production, but no previous system has existed in which the mass of the wealth producers were property-less wage workers, hiring themselves out by the day, week or month to a non-working property-owning class as the Capitalists of to-day. In no previous system was profit the primary motive of production, a profit derived from the unpaid labours of the Working Class, as we shall show. These are features distinctive of Capitalism. If the slaves of antiquity, kept directly by their masters, and producing wealth with crude methods, could sustain such Empires as that of Greece or Rome, it is obvious that wage workers to-day, with colossal steam- and electricity-driven machinery, can produce an enormous surplus above the value of their keep given them in money (wages). As in previous slave systems, the wealth produced becomes the property of the Masters, its great proportionate increase explains the orgies of luxury enjoyed by the Capitalists and their hangers-on to-day. Exploitation gives the key to an understanding of Capital. To-day the Workers as a class are born, and remain, property-less; they therefore do not own Capital, which is a form of wealth. Capital is the accumulated wealth of the Capitalist Class. It is used for further production, but with only one object—that it may absorb the further unpaid labour of the Workers, and thus produce the surplus value mentioned—the source of Rent, Interest and Profit. Not the means of wealth production in themselves, but the class relations under which they are used to obtain surplus value,

realised through sale in the world market—make them Capital.

Bodies like the Labour Party and the I.L.P. do not stand as we do for common ownership, which would mean the abolition of such class relations. The I.L.P. (*Forward*, May 12th, 1928) asks:—

When and where any Socialist ever pretended or suggested that we could dispense with Capital. Socialists propose that Capital should be publicly owned.

Socialists do nothing of the kind. By Public Ownership the I.L.P. means Nationalisation or Government Ownership, a condition under which the Capitalists would still collectively own their property as Bond Holders, while the Workers would still be exploited by receiving wages which presuppose unpaid labour. That explains their enthusiasm for a Living Wage and their desire to retain Capital. Even when they call Government Ownership Socialism, as in their pamphlet "*Socialism at Work in Queensland*," we find the wages system in full working Capitalist "order."

During a recent dispute in which 11,000 of Queensland's State employees were suspended or dismissed for refusing to handle what they called "*Black*" traffic for the Lo. Johnstone sugar mill,

Mr. McCormack's Labour Government fought the Railwaymen's leaders, as an employer, and won. (Report "*Daily Chronicle*," 12/9/27.)

All Socialists stand for the abolition of Capital. It is implied in the abolition of class society through the Workers' emancipation. Common ownership must end exploitation because society's means of livelihood would cease to be the private property of the Capitalist few—in their hands, Capital.

MAC.

## GLASGOW.

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**The Socialist Standard,**

JULY,



1928

**MAXTON AND COOK'S  
CATCHWORDS.**

The recent manifesto by James Maxton (Chairman of the I.L.P.) and A. J. Cook (Miners' Secretary) has received much notice in the Press, but only of a sensational kind.

The manifesto calls for a fight against the Capitalist system, but both the signers are supporters of the Labour Party, which has done its best to maintain and carry on the Capitalist system.

They claim that there has been a serious departure from the views of the founders of the Labour Party, such as Keir Hardie, but no evidence of that is offered or can be offered. Keir Hardie, Macdonald and other prominent leaders did not carry out a war against Capitalism and in favour of Socialism, but always stood for a long programme of reforms which would leave the system intact. Even in the early days of the Labour Party they ridiculed the principle of the Class Struggle, which lies at the root of the Socialist Movement—and the leadership, the policy and the programme of the Labour Party still ignore and gloss over the Class Conflict.

Cook and Maxton refer, with pride, to the thirty years' work of the Labour Party, which they claim is now being destroyed. What is the thirty years' work of the Labour Party? It is not as Cook and Maxton claim—work against the present economic system. For nearly thirty years

the Labour Party have been recruiting the working class for a policy so much in harmony with the Liberals that several times they have called upon the workers to back up Lloyd George, Asquith and Co. in their Capitalist policies. Budget agitations, House of Lords' Reform, Land Taxes, and similar anti-Socialist planks have been the common programme of Liberals and Labour. So much so, that to-day the Labour and Independent Labour Parties' cry is that the Liberal Industrial Report has been largely compiled from Labour's Programme.

The Labour Government of 1924, endorsed by the I.L.P., is another example of what Maxton and Cook call, the "thirty years' work" against Capitalism. A Labour Government, maintained by Liberals, to carry on Capitalist policies!

What is the alternative suggested by those two advocates of the Labour Party? Simply that we should return to the policy of Keir Hardie and other founders of the Labour Party. This parade of sentiment about the pioneers ignores the fact that their policy was not Socialism, but actually so directly opposed to the Class Struggle of the workers that these "pioneers," including Keir Hardie, supported the World War of 1914—a logical result of the anti-working class attitude of these alleged pioneers.

The objection raised by Maxton to the Mond Industrial Peace Conference ignores the fact that a majority of those taking part in the Conference with Mond and other employers are members of the I.L.P., and no action has been taken by the I.L.P. to expel or to repudiate them. A. J. Cook's objection to the Mond Peace Conference is not one of principle. More than once the journal of his supporters (the Communist Party)—*The Workers' Life*—has denounced Cook's statement that he would not mind if only the Conference was representative of both sides, and had power to act.

At the Keir Hardie Memorial Demonstration, at Old Cumnock on Sunday, June 24th, Maxton defended the "Living Wage" Policy of the I.L.P., and completely ignored the fact that the "Living Wage" Campaign was simply a programme for the maintenance of Capitalism, with a series of minimum wage laws similar to the Trade Board's Acts which legalise "sweating."

There is nothing revolutionary in a policy which proposes to tax the employers in order to relieve slightly the employers' industrial victims.

It may be good election propaganda on the Clyde to talk vaguely about fighting Capitalism, but neither Maxton nor Cook have ever been prepared to lay down a Socialist Policy. They may be very useful to entice into the Labour Party those who are hoping that new leaders mean real changes. The workers, however, will still have to learn that new leaders and new catchwords do not take the place of sound knowledge and a Socialist Policy.

**SOME EFFECTS OF  
COMBINATION AND MACHINERY.**

This world of ours does change! Or, rather, the evolution of Capitalism compels its apologists to perform astonishing somersaults in reasoning.

Not so many years ago one of the principal arguments against the Socialist was that he proposed to do away with competition and thus take away from industry its greatest means of progress. Since those days the war and post-war scramble for markets has so speeded up the introduction and improvement of machinery and commercial organisation, that amalgamations on a gigantic scale have been the general order of the day. Matters have reached a point now that it has become futile for Capitalists to attempt any longer to throw dust in the eyes of the majority of people with any hope of real success. However, these people do not eat their words; they do better, they forget what they have said in the past and now try to prove what advantages are coming from trustification in comparison with the old methods of cut-throat competition.

To the Worker who cares to think calmly over the situation, and look at it entirely from his own point of view as a Worker, the position is simple. The needs of the whole inhabitants of the world are limited; as machinery and organisation is improved it becomes more and more easy to meet these needs. Thus, relatively fewer and fewer people are required in production. The improvement in machinery and organisation, in contrast with the needs of the population, is practically unlimited, so that there must ultimately come a time when a com-

paratively small number of Workers will produce all that can be consumed. This is the dead wall up against which Capitalism dashes its head.

In ancient Rome, where a parallel situation arose, though, of course, only on a minute scale, the situation was met by the distribution of free food, etc., amongst the somewhat unruly unemployed. In modern times the rulers are more niggardly than Roman Patricians were, and they try to meet the situation by the distribution of carefully supervised doles that a dog could hardly live on, let alone a man with a family. But then, the Capitalist is up against a difficulty that did not exist in those old days. He *must* have a supply of labour, and if the dole is made enough to live on—well, who would want to work his energies out at the pace demanded by modern industry? Surely not anyone of intelligence! Yet a "dole" that is insufficient breeds rebellious workers, and as the majority of workers are at one time in employment and at another time dole-takers, and as the future is going to bring a greater and greater tightness in employment, the Capitalist is finding his difficulties reaching a point when it will require a considerable amount of strategy to keep matters running smoothly—particularly as the Capitalists are by no means the most intelligent portion of the population.

I have been moved to make these remarks by two articles I read recently. One was by the New York correspondent of the *Daily News* (June 4th, 1928), who said, writing of conditions in America (where the headline has recently appeared, to the astonishment of the Capitalist world):

American enterprise in the use of machinery is shown by the statement made at a recent meeting of manufacturers that in the motor trade one man can now do work which in 1914 required three.

He goes on to point out that the average of the countries' industries shows that only 71 men are now needed to do the work of 100 in 1914, which means a proportional reduction in employment of 29 per cent. He points out that American writers complain that still "better" results would have been obtained if out-of-date machinery was more rapidly scrapped, as is happening in the motor industry.

He adds that

American employers insist that machinery is creating a finer type of workman. It takes



more brains to watch a machine than to handle a pick and shovel, they say.

Speaking as one who has both handled a pick and shovel and has seen others "watching" a machine, I must seriously question the view. I discovered, to my cost, that it required, not only a good deal of intelligence, but a considerable amount of experience, to handle a pick and shovel properly. And as to pushing a loaded wheelbarrow along a narrow plank—well!!!

But farther on comes the joke—unconscious humour is one of the principal characteristics of those who endeavour to bolster up the present system.

The new problem is how to keep the worker awake and alert at his job. One method now being tried is to design machinery which signals the need for attention by sound and not by sight. . . .

Another suggestion seriously made is that a regular stimulus should be given to the worker, perhaps in the form of a regular vibration of the platform on which he stands.

Now either machine minding is such an exhausting occupation that the worn-out worker falls to sleep from exhaustion, in which case that worker can be little more than a work-beast, like the little children of the early factory times in England in the last century, or is so dull and monotonous, and demands such little mental energy, that the workers are driven to sleep by it. They can have it which way they like, but surely, fellow worker, you would rather not have it either way?

The other article to which I referred was written by Harold Cox in the *Sunday Times* (June 3rd, 1928). There are some interesting extracts from it:

That there is an increasing tendency among leaders of industry to organise trade combinations is a matter of common knowledge. The movement takes two forms: in some cases firms which still maintain their separate identities are linked together in a federation or cartel, for purposes of common defence and common advantages; in other cases separate firms are completely amalgamated in a single unit or "combine." Both forms of this modern industrial movement are far advanced in the United States and Germany. . . . Nor is this modern industrial movement confined to national areas. Already several international combinations have been established, and there are prospects of the creation of more in the near future. . . .

With the aid of modern machinery we can now produce goods at a pace that was hardly dreamt of a hundred years ago, and the result is that in many cases the power of production has overtaken the world's capacity for consumption. In the earlier years of the nineteenth century,

and, indeed, during the greater part of that century, there seemed, so far at any rate, as British trade was concerned, to be an almost insatiable demand for the goods that machinery was able to produce. . . . To-day, except in the case of new industries created to meet a new world demand, such as the motor industry and the artificial silk industry, the need for additional factories in Great Britain has practically ceased. Our trouble now is to find work for many of the factories already in being.

There is the position in a nutshell. Production has outstripped consumption, and yet the children line up outside the baker shops in the morning for bread; more is produced than can be consumed, and yet thousands are unable to obtain sufficient for their bare needs. Industry promises you more unemployment, and harder work when you get employment, and yet wealth is produced with an ease and abundance undreamt of a century ago! Are you satisfied that the present organisation of society is satisfactory? Can you think of anything worth while that you are likely to lose (except poverty and insecurity!) by abolishing private property in the means of production and substitution for it the common ownership of these means of production?

You hear a great deal of "tariff walls" and the like; set your mind at rest, the international combines are reducing tariffs to a joke. Treat tariffs and their expounders with the humour they deserve, and concentrate your mind upon the removal of the shackles of wage slavery. It is Capitalism that is your enemy—abolish it.

GILMAC.

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## THE HISTORY OF THE INTERNATIONAL.

(Continued from last issue.)

(History of First International by G. M. Stekloff. Martin Lawrence. 12/6.)

The International Working Men's Association was dominated numerically by the followers of Proudhon, who appealed to the petty bourgeois outlook of the lands where petty enterprise still held the field.

One of Proudhon's supporters, "Fribourg," writing a history of the International, brings out the Proudhonists' opposition to strikes and their belief in petty credit reforms as the road to prosperity. He says:

The question of strikes, so inopportune raised by the Blanquists at this epoch (the time of the first bureau), had no more determined opponents than the members of the International. Their advice was sometimes listened to, and to the International belongs the honour of having frustrated all attempts at a strike in the building trade during the years 1865, 1866 and 1867. Consumption, production, credit, solidarity, building societies, penny banks, mutual credit, societies—such were for years the questions discussed every evening by this little comity of workers. (Page 74.)

There we have an indication of the tremendous difficulties under which Marx and his supporters worked. On the one side, English Labour leaders, like George Odger, George Howell and Randall Cremer, who were really Liberals (masquerading as Labour men), and, on the other side, the anarchist and reformist supporters of Proudhon and Bakunin.

The latter, with his high-sounding fury and anti-political policy, was able to win a good deal of support.

From the time the International was organised, in 1862, till its last Congress took place at the Hague in 1872, its history was a struggle between these elements with a widely-diverging policy. Marx struggled to teach the necessity of organisation and of independent political action to promote the victory of the International Working Class.

Writing of Bakunin, the author of this history gives a good summary of the background of his ideas. He says:

Bourgeois society was breaking the chains imposed on it by the pre-capitalist system, and was undermining the foundations of the old order; but it was itself still unstable, and had not yet been able to organise its strength for a fight on two fronts, with the feudalists, on the one hand, and with the developing forces

of the working class on the other. The titanic figure of Bakunin seems to have been a natural outgrowth of this critical period when the pre-bourgeois order was giving place to the bourgeois order. His figure was an appropriate one in such an epoch, when social ties, political institutions, and ideas were all in a state of flux. It was appropriate to days when the old governing class had been defeated, and when the new governing class was still weak but was inspired with vague but grandiose hopes—hopes begotten of the chaotic ferment that characterised this transition period. Naturally, people's heads were easily turned, especially when the people were hot-heads like Bakunin. Thus, although this historic convulsion was nothing more than that caused by the efforts of bourgeois society to throw off its swaddling-clothes, Bakunin fancied that the final collapse of capitalism was imminent. What had really arrived was the end of the first phase in the development of capitalist society; but he, taking the beginning for the end, believed that the prologue of the social revolution was being played. This mistake arose from the fact that, substantially, he was not the ideological expression of the industrial proletariat, now undergoing consolidation, and developing concurrently with the development of the bourgeoisie. What Bakunin represented, ideologically speaking, was the economically backward countries like Russia and Italy. In these, and especially in Russia, capitalism was still in the period of what is known as "primitive accumulation," and capitalist exploitation of the workers and the semi-proletarian sections of the peasantry was only in its initial stages. In actual fact, the aspirations, instincts, and elemental protests of those among the peasants who were being ruined by capitalist developments, played a considerable part in Bakunin's philosophy. They were the cause of his hostility to Communism; and of his still greater hostility to Social Democracy; they accounted for his antagonism to the State in all its forms, and for his anarchist activities; to a great extent, they determined both the form and the content of his insurrectionist philosophy. (Pages 151-152.)

The Bolsheviks of the Marx-Engels Institute at Moscow, who publish this work, can draw many lessons from paragraphs such as that just quoted.

It seems applicable in a large degree to the rise of Bolshevism in Russia to-day, and the direct action and insurrection policy of modern Communists seems to be largely borrowed from Bakunin.

Bakunin formed many secret societies in opposition to the International itself, and the programme of one of the Bakunist "Alliances" is quoted by the author:

Atheism, the complete negation of all authority, the annulment of law, the denial of civil obligations, the substitution of free humanity for the State, collective ownership; labour was in this programme represented to be the foundation of social organisation, manifesting itself in the form of a great federation from below upwards. (Page 153.)



Marx was so much occupied by his writings and his work on the General Council in London that he was only able to attend the last Congress. But the history under review shows the advice and suggestions constantly made by him to endeavour to defeat the enemies of the International who turned up at the various Congresses.

The keen efforts of Marx and the part he played in the International is shown in the Manifestoes written for the International before and after the Commune of Paris, when such a crushing blow was made against the International.

The efforts made to unite the world's workers from 1862 to 1872 suffered from the lack of development of the workers, due to their social environment and the mixture of reactionary notions to which they succumbed. The International, however, was worth while as a pioneer step in bringing home to all the need for international solidarity. Its weaknesses belonged to its time. Many of the causes of its decline explain to-day the decline of the Third International, which endeavoured to bring together a collection of mutually warring policies and hammer them into a movement with a programme adopted from the most backward country economically—Russia.

In the course of narrating the history of the International, the author frequently attempts to oppose Anarchist policies by policies equally absurd. On the question of reform, he ignores the fact that the workers' struggles for reforms may be justified in the early days of the system, but that such efforts are now out of date.

One such optimistic statement may be quoted. He says:

Reforms that are wrested by the workers from their class antagonists are blows that shake the bourgeois State, and when frequently repeated they may shake it to its foundations. Whereas to the bourgeoisie partial reforms seem buttresses that are needed to strengthen the capitalist building, in the hands of the working class these same reforms may become levers used to shake the stability of the edifice—provided always that those who are to utilise the reforms in this way have a true understanding of the general course of the historical struggle of the proletariat. (Page 171.)

But a little later he makes another statement, which shows the dangers of reform agitation. He says:

Of course, from time to time, an unsuccessful struggle for reform may end in the destruction

of the working class organisations which that struggle has called into existence. Such was the fate of the Chartist Movement. Nevertheless the usual effect of the struggle for reforms is to promote the growth of working class organisations. We must not generalise unduly. Sometimes the realisation of reforms for which a struggle has been in progress, will take the fire out of large sections of the working class, and may even lead to the temporary arrest of the whole working class movement. That is what happened in Britain, for instance, during the late 'sixties, and the early 'seventies of the nineteenth century (see below). In other cases, the impossibility of achieving the reforms that are desired by the proletariat has the same result. (Page 173.)

In a short article we cannot do justice to this book, which is a mine of information and would well repay a worker's study. In closing, we will quote the farewell speech of Marx after the last Congress (1872), which was held at the Hague. Addressing the meeting (at Amsterdam), Marx said:

Fellow-citizens! Let us think of the fundamental principle of the International—Solidarity. We shall attain our great goal if we can establish this life-giving principle firmly among all the workers of all lands. *The revolution must be the work of solidarised efforts.* We can learn this from the great example of the Commune of Paris. Why did the Commune fall? It fell because there did not simultaneously occur in all the capitals—in Berlin, in Madrid and the rest—a great revolutionary movement linked with the mighty upheaval of the Parisian proletariat.

For my own part, I shall continue to work at my chief task, at promoting the solidarity of the workers, which I regard as so momentous for the future. Rest assured that I shall not cease to work for the International; and that the years that remain to me, like the years I have already lived, will be consecrated to the triumph of the Socialist idea, which we doubt not, will one day lead to the dominion of the proletariat. (Page 242.)

A. KOHN.

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## **THE FIRST OPPRESSORS IN ENGLAND.**

Once upon a time, many thousands of years ago, when this country was covered with forests and swamps and there was no sea between it and the rest of Europe, a race of rather small, long-headed dark people roamed in the river valleys living on wild fruits and the flesh of what animals they secured in hunting. Their homes were caves and rabbit-like burrows. Their neighbours the mammoth, the woolly rhinoceros, the reindeer, the elephant, the hippopotamus and the lion. Life was very hard for them as their acquirements were few. They made tools and weapons out of stone roughly chipped into a form that helped to some extent in the struggle for life. Of boatbuilding they knew nothing beyond the skin boats in which they hazarded their lives on the watercourses. Of property they were equally ignorant, for they had none. Their social organisation was the horde with women at the centre.

These people may not have been the first inhabitants of England, but, according to Sir Arthur Keith and others, they are the people who have persisted down to the present day and now form the bulk of the population of this country. They had come from the East with hungry stomachs and no other object than the obtaining of food. They were savages who painted their bodies and shivered at the sight and sound of the workings of the forces of Nature. They knew neither gods nor devils for, like the child, they saw in inanimate things the power to reason and act as they did themselves.

For thousands of years they lived their lives here unmolested by others of their kind, until one day, again from the East, there came another race of people, tall and fair. These fair people came by water, as the vanishing of the ice ages had left behind a channel of water between this country and the Continent. The newcomers had climbed high in human culture. They were people of the new (polished) stone age, with a knowledge of agriculture, pottery-making, spinning and weaving, boat-building, and had learnt the art of domesticating animals.

Between the old inhabitants and the new there was one tremendous difference—the former had come to satisfy their hunger, the latter came to satisfy their trading

instincts. The former had no property, the latter has left behind evidence, for instance, in the shape of tombs, showing that an inequality of wealth had already forced its way into their social conditions.

The fair people came searching for stone, for amber and, in a lesser degree, for pearls. They colonised, like the later English in India, Africa and America, and, like the latter, also they looked upon the people they found here as fit subjects to rule and exploit. Few in numbers they were at the beginning, and the objects they obtained they sent back along the trade routes they had made to the mother country. They found their new home a promising one. With their improved tools, particularly the polished stone axe, they commenced to make inroads on the forest that still covered the land. The change in the climate had already driven away many of the fierce animals that terrorised the older people. More and more of the fair people were attracted to these shores. They cultivated the ground, dug for tin, and built huge stone circles and temples, relics of which Stonehenge and Avebury still remain to mystify and amaze us.

Who were these fair people? Ah, there is the rub! To Monroe and others they were a somewhat mystifying "Celtic" people whose origin is clothed in mist. To Elliot Smith and Perry they were colonists from Egypt. To Waddell they were Phœnicians of Aryan origin. But upon one point they are all agreed—they came and subjected the aboriginal race to their domination. Here you have the commencement of class domination in England. There you have the beginning of what brought in this country the manorial lord, the feudal baron, the power of sovereigns, and ultimately the domination of the capitalists. GILMAC.

## **KNOWLEDGE.**

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**HERO WORSHIP.****A Conversation with a Visitor from Mars.***(Continued from June Issue.)*

As the 'magical' rites performed by the 'medicine-man' are deemed indispensable to the prosperity of the tribe, our 'hero' gains great influence and repute, and often acquires the rank and authority of a *chief* or *king*. Later the time arrives when this position is made hereditary, and soon the 'magician's' wand becomes the sceptre of 'kingly authority'! And so we see, Marty, that the exalted origin of kings and emperors—the 'divine right of kings'—is the plausible, shrivelled-up impostor thought to be so powerful by my ancestors, but whose best performances to-day would scarcely attract the notice of a street audience.

"But, however bad the institution of monarchy has been for the human race, its effects have been negligible compared with the terrible superstitions called religions, which have grown up out of the 'magical' rites performed by the medicine-man. The old mimicry and flabdoodle of these rites are still the stock-in-trade of our religions, but all the arts of civilisation have been called upon to gratify the senses of the devotees, to dignify fraud, to sanctify humbug and implant superstitious beliefs in the minds of the masses, and so resist the effect of revolutionary ideas engendered by the economic conditions endured by the enslaved majority. But happily the wide spread of knowledge, which the capitalist class has been compelled to facilitate, is steadily weakening the hold of religion upon the community.

"In enumerating the effects of this primitive 'hero-worship,' however, one must bear in mind that, as the antidote is never far from the poison, so the experiments of the witch-doctor with herbal concoctions mark the beginnings of medical science, his 'magical' rites led to the development of many arts and crafts, and his pretended study of the stars led (via astrology) to the science of astronomy. That is to say, the eradication of superstition led to *honest* enquiry.

"It may be relevant here, Marty, to comment upon another phase of 'hero-worship,' which appears to have been in being in the earliest stages of social development. Age seems to have been the first privilege to creep into society. In

early communities we find the membership of the Council of the tribe was confined almost invariably to men of advanced years. This deference paid to old-age (perhaps originally due to some savage association of ideas connecting whiskers with wisdom!) went to ludicrous lengths during the Patriarchal stage, but although capitalism has brutally reversed old conceptions regarding senility, the old tradition is often hypocritically used by members of the ruling class and their agents as a valuable aid in the task of bemusing the minds of the workers. With what tragical frequency, for instance, does it happen that when some venerable ancient holding high office in a Trade Union, after years spent in beguiling and tricking the members, is exposed and denounced for his flagrant treachery, the members are deterred from taking salutary (and summary!) action by reminders of his past services. Such phrases as 'Be not hard on one who has grown grey in the Movement' or 'Do not forget that Wheedler has sacrificed the best years of his life in your interests,' etc., *ad nauseam*, are repeatedly showered upon the duped men in supplicating tones, whilst the fact that Wheedler has also grown affluent and corpulent is not mentioned. The curse of whiskers . . ."

"Enough!" Marty imperiously exclaimed, at the same time fondling his really superb golden beard. "do not deteriorate into childish prattle. You have touched upon a subject which is interesting to me—the question of leadership. Now can you impart some information as to the effects of 'leadership' upon the various subject classes you have mentioned? And"—here Marty winced perceptibly—"leave whiskers alone!"

Thus rebuked, I changed the trend of my remarks. "You may be surprised to learn, Marty, that it took centuries of the experience of chattel-slavery before the idea of 'leadership' was conceived. Tribal society was often engaged in warfare, but the military commanders were warlike men who received delegated authority from the tribe. During peace time such persons reverted to their ordinary occupations, and were without any special privileges. But although the idea of 'leadership' (as differentiated from delegated authority) arose out of the habits of obedience enforced under chattel-slavery, you must not

**THE RT. HON. MR. WHEATLEY JOINS THE ALLIANCE.**

It has been calculated that of the rich persons who joined the Labour Party recently 50 per cent. were already candidates and the others were signing the book daily at the "Parliamentary Employment Exchange." ("Daily Herald," 26/6/28.)

The above is from the speech of the Right Hon. John Wheatley, M.P., Minister of Health in the Labour Government of 1924 and supporter of the Holy Catholic Church.

The new alliance of Cook, Maxton and Wheatley has a programme described by Mr. Wheatley thus:

Cook and Maxton declare that the workers should constitutionally seize the present surplus wealth of the idle rich and use it to give a decent standard of life here and now to the working classes.

So the party of rich candidates (the Labour Party) are going to seize—by taxation—some of the surplus and give it to the poor.

How that is going to affect the exploiting nature of Capitalism Mr. Wheatley doesn't explain. It sounds as revolutionary as Lloyd George's Insurance Act or Gladstone's Death Duties. What this triple alliance want is pathetically put by Wheatley—"You should hit Capitalism oftener and harder." How hard and how often, Mr. Wheatley? To stand for the overthrow of Capitalism, not often but all the time, is not their way. And it would not sound as well as Mr. Wheatley's patriotic reformism as made plain in his evidence in his libel action. K.

**S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS****LONDON DISTRICT.**

- Sundays** ... Clapham Common, 6 p.m.  
Tottenham, West Green Corner, 11.30 a.m.  
Tooting, Ganett Lane, Tooting Broadway, 7.30 p.m.  
Victoria Park, 4 p.m.  
Woolwich, Beresford Square, 7.30 p.m.
- Mondays** ... Paddington, Prince of Wales, 8 p.m.  
Clerkenwell, Garnault Place, 8 p.m.
- Wednesdays** ... Hackney, Paragon Road and Mare Street, 8 p.m.
- Thursdays** ... Becontree, Rodney Street, Ilford, 8 p.m.
- Fridays** ... Clerkenwell, Acton St., Grays Inn Rd., 8 p.m.
- Saturdays** ... West Ham, Water Lane, 8 p.m.  
Wood Green, Jolly Butchers Hill, 8 p.m.  
Leyton, Corner Grange Park, 7.30 p.m.

**HANLEY BRANCH.**

- Sundays** ... Hanley Market Square, 7 p.m.  
Burslem, St. John Square, 7 p.m.

suppose that the slaves themselves tamely submitted to their lot. On the contrary, the great empires of Chaldea, Egypt, Greece and Rome were at times seriously threatened by slave revolts. Thus in Rome (B.C. 73) a Thracian slave called Spartacus gathered a large body of followers and ravaged Italy from end to end, and defeated several Roman armies, until he was at last slain. Undoubtedly, Spartacus was a great leader of men, and the obedience rendered grudgingly by the slaves to their masters was willingly given to him. Accordingly, the slaves, having put all their hopes in the keeping of one man, these hopes perished with the death of the man, and the capable army became a mere rabble and was easily conquered. The bloody vengeance of the ruling class upon these rebels against slavery has no parallel in history—save, perhaps, the massacres after the Paris Commune. The terrible lesson of this vengeance was ever in the minds of the slaves, and no further revolts on such a gigantic scale occurred; and, as there was apparently no earthly saviour, they eventually succumbed to the teachings of the divine-man saviour (Jesus), later encouraged by their masters, who saw its usefulness in instilling earthly contentedness.

"In the history of my country, Marty, the rebellion of the peasants, led by Wat Tyler (1381), provides another example of the senselessness in placing all one's trust and hopes in 'leaders.' The revolt was highly successful until Tyler was murdered, and then his infuriated followers were eventually mollified by the young king, who promised to be their leader and redress their wrongs. Of course, when the peasants had returned home, the ruling class opened its campaign of vengeance, and desisted in its slaughter only when it realized that it was reducing the number of wealth makers so grievously that any further 'displacement' of labour would send wages soaring.

*(To be continued.)*

Contributions are earnestly invited to assist us with the expense of publishing more literature.

**YOUR** newsagent can obtain the "Socialist Standard" through the wholesalers, W. H. Smith & Son. Ask him to get your copy, but if you have any difficulty send direct to 17, Mount Pleasant, London, W.C.1.



## BRANCH DIRECTORY.

- BATTERSEA.**—Sec., 2, Hanbury-road, S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns-road. Discussion second Thurs. in month.
- BECONTREE.**—Sec., Hy. Gratton, 4, Drummond Ave., Brooklands, Romford. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 7.30, at above address.
- BETHNAL GREEN.**—Communications to D. Jacobs, 28, Lyal Road, Bow, E.8.
- BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec. E. Jesper, 38, Rollason-rd., Erdington. Branch meets The Continental Café, Moor St., 1st and 3rd Sundays at 11 a.m.
- CAMBERWELL.**—Sec., J. Goodfellow, 40, Solon New Road, Clapham, S.W.4. Branch meets at Camberwell Trades Council Room, 6A, Artichoke Place, Camberwell Green, every Friday at 8.30 p.m. Discussions—public invited.
- CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.
- CLERKENWELL.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at 17, Mount Pleasant, W.C.1. Discussions first Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.—all invited. Sec., at above address.
- EAST LONDON.**—Sec., A. Jacobs, 78 Eric-st., Mile-end, E.8. Branch meets first and third Mondays in month at above address.
- EAST HAM.**—Branch meets at 1, Tyrone-road, East Ham. Wednesdays at 8 p.m. Communications. Sec. at above address.
- HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Mondays, 8 p.m. at The Old Gravel Pit Hall, Mare-street, Hackney. Branch Business 1st and 3rd Mondays. Discussions 2nd and 4th Mondays. Sec. at above address.
- HANLEY.**—Branch meets Tuesdays, Working Men's Club, Glass-st. Sec., F. Goldstraw, 38, Paddock Street, Hanley.
- ISLINGTON.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 144, Seven Sister-rd., Holloway, N. Sec., M. Baker, 18, Orpingley-rd., N.7.
- LEYTON.**—Sec., A. Holland, 396, Lea Bridge-rd., Leyton. Branch meets 8 p.m., Trades and Labour Hall, Grove House, High-rd., every Monday. Public invited.
- MANCHESTER.**—Sec., W. Addison, 111, West Park-street, Salford, Manchester.—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month, 7.45 p.m., at 114, Duke St., Stretford-road.
- PADDINGTON.**—Branch meeting held on 2nd and 4th Fridays, 8 p.m., in room above the Co-operative Stores, 306, Kilburn-lane, W.9 (side door).
- SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Sec., J. Bird, 5 Welling-ton-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.
- TOOTING.**—Sec., 15, University-road, Collier's Wood, S.W.19. Branch meets every Friday at 8 p.m. at Tooting Adult School, 971, Garratt-lane, S.W.17.
- TOTTENHAM.**—Secretary, 18, Woodlands Park, N.15. Branch meets Fridays, Room 2, Trades Hall, 7, Bruce Grove. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.
- WALTHAMSTOW.**—Sec., S. E. Williams, 3, Dyson-rd., Leytonstone, E.11. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.

**WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107 Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at Secretary's address.

**WEST HAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford rd., Stratford. Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

**WOOD GREEN.**—All communications to Sec., F. W. Godfrey, 71, Falkland Road, N.8.

**WOOLWICH.**—Branch meets at 94, Griffin Road, Plumstead. Communications to Secretary at above address.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interests of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great HOLDS— Britain

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.



# THE Socialist Standard

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[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

## ARE THE CO-OPERATORS SOCIALISTS?

Many workers appear to believe that Co-operative Societies are a form of Socialism, or at least a step towards the establishment of Socialism. Most of the co-operators are supporters of the Labour Party, or of its allies the Co-op. Party, and it is curious to notice how blind they are to the contradiction in their own position. The Labour Party stands for State and Municipal Trading and the extension of this form of enterprise necessarily comes into competition with Co-operative concerns just as much as ordinary capitalist ventures. But this is a minor point.

The Co-ops. buy and sell at a profit. Otherwise they would very soon cease to exist. This profit is derived from the unpaid portion of the labour of some section of the workers. It is immaterial whether these workers are directly employed in production by the Co-ops. themselves or by the outside concerns who produce goods in which the Co-ops. deal. The fact that some of this profit is distributed in the form of "divi" among working-class consumers and members blinds the latter to the real position.

Any reduction in the cost of living brought about by wholesale buying, irrespective of whether it is done by Co-ops. or other multiple shop concerns, simply enables the master-class to reduce wages accordingly. There is thus no advantage to be gained by the workers in the long run along those lines.

When we come to consider the productive side of Co-op. enterprises we find little, if any, difference between them and capitalist concerns which have no pretensions about bringing in the co-operative commonwealth.

Speaking at the recent Co-op. Congress at West Hartlepool, Mr. A. V. Alexander (Sheffield) is reported to have stated that "the Government policy (*i.e.*, safeguarding of industry) was insidious and dangerous, and corrupted co-operators."

"If a Co-operative factory was producing an article obtaining Protection, the people concerned did not want to oppose Protection, and the larger interests of the whole consumers were lost in the desire of the factory manager for larger profit in his factory." ("Sheffield Telegraph and Star," May 30th.)

Note that "Co-operation" simply divides the workers into "producers" and "consumers," confuses their minds with issues such as Protection (which are only of importance to the master-class) and rests fundamentally on the "desire for profit."

A recent instance of friction between the C.W.S. and some of its employees illustrates this point further. The Northumberland Miners' Association, Shilbottle Branch, issued a manifesto calling attention to the low wages paid by the C.W.S. in their Shilbottle Colliery. This was published in the "Manchester Guardian" of April 20th. In their reply the C.W.S. simply take up the pose of "philanthropic" employers, pointing out that they pay their men for holidays, give them coal free and house them in model villages. It reminds one of Leverhulme and Cadbury and other anti-Socialists, but the tit-bit is the following:—

It is difficult to understand what is meant by the allegation that hard-working men are getting as low as 28s. per week. As a matter of fact the pit has worked full-time during this year, so that piece-workers with 5½ days per week would earn £1 17s. 7d. as the least possible wage.



After such an example of the reckless munificence in which they indulge, one can hardly wonder at the Society protesting against the miners' lodge "appealing to the sentiment of the co-operative movement by a series of mis-statements." Thirty-seven bob for a week in a pit! What carping critic dare now say that the emancipation of the wage-slaves is not in sight?

Fellow-workers, Socialism means a system of life in which the instrument of labour will be common property.

Consequently the fruits of labour under such conditions will be freely available to all. There will be no need for the workers to buy and sell that which they own as a result of their collective effort. Organised distribution, democratically controlled according to a definite plan based upon social needs will replace all juggling with "divi." and wages and such-like features of capitalism. Such a system can replace the existing chaos in which you suffer, just as soon as you are ready to establish it by means of your political power. When you realise the need for this you will have no time left to waste on Labour or Co-op. Parties, which tinker with effects while leaving causes untouched. You will get on with the job in the only way possible, i.e., by joining and helping forward the work of the Socialist Party.

E. B.

#### NOTICE.

Owing to the number of letters from correspondents which we reply to in this issue, the conclusion of Plechanoff's article is postponed till next month.

#### RECEIVED FOR REVIEW.

"The Workers' Passport," by W. T. Colyer (Labour Research Dept.), 3s. 6d. S.E.17.

#### GET TOGETHER!

Readers of the "Socialist Standard" who desire to be put into communication with other readers in their district are invited to notify the General Secretary, at 17 Mount Pleasant, W.C.1.

### BALLOT OR BARRICADE?

#### MR. CHAPMAN'S LAST WORD.

To the Editor of the SOCIALIST STANDARD.

(1) "H," in his reply to my second letter in the June issue of the "S.S.," tries to make enormous capital from my slightly altered quotation from Marx, so will you kindly state the fact that it merely consisted of substituting "bloody struggles" for Marx's "sanguinary conflicts."

(2) Against the two letters that "H" quotes in the May issue of the "S.S.," re Marx to Kugelmann on the Franchise (both are dated 1866), I will quote the one of April, 1871, re the policy of *smashing* instead of *conquering* the political machine: "If you look again in the last chapter of my '18th Brumaire' you will find my (Marx's) opinion that the next French Revolution will no more attempt to transfer the bureaucratic military state machinery from one hand to another, but will try to break it in pieces." (Published in the "Labour Monthly," August, 1922.) Again Marx in his work, "Revolution and Counter Revolution," Chapter 9, page 68, writes: "When Radetzky, in his camp beyond the Adige, received the first orders from the responsible ministers at Vienna, he exclaimed: 'Who are these ministers? They are not the government of Austria! Austria is now nowhere but in my camp; I and my army, we are Austria; and when we shall have beaten the Italians, we shall reconquer the Empire for the Emperor!' And old Radetzky was right—but the imbecile 'responsible ministers' at Vienna heeded him not."

(3) "H" says (page 150, June "S.S."), that conditions were different in 1850, etc., and that a policy fit for those times no longer applies. I say that the conditions of the workers were the same in 1850 (in a general sense) as they are now, and that the proletariat at that time were faced with the same fundamental problem as they are now, viz., the forcible overthrow of the bourgeoisie.

(4) "H" says (in the May issue of the "S.S.," page 141): "If the workers are compelled (in the event of a revolution) to make use of their economic organisation to bring industry to a standstill, and to appeal to the armed forces for support," etc. This has been tried and found wanting in the General Strike of 1926, and with what result? That the present sham democratic government was revealed in its true colours, viz., that it is a bourgeoisie military dictatorship—Stratocracy!

(5) I should like an academic party like the S.P.G.B. to explain to me the following:—If universal suffrage could emancipate the workers, the tyrants in power would have abolished it years ago!

I remain, Yours faithfully,

ROBERT CHAPMAN.

N.B.—The onus of explaining how the workers are to be armed, trained, etc., does not rest on me, but on the S.P.G.B., who talk so lightly of conquering the political machinery, and establishing Socialism. I cannot believe that the bourgeoisie would give up their property without a blood-bath.

P.S.—Brevity owing to Editor's note:—The position that the S.P.G.B. takes up with regard

to the Vote is extraordinary in its childish simplicity, and amounts, in effect, to this:—Before a General Election S.P.G.B.'s will say: "Dear Comrades, Just put an X on a card (of so great a value) and everything in the garden will be lovely." What a revolutionary party! The Party, in my opinion, fails to realise the enormous obstacles in our path to Socialism.

ROBERT CHAPMAN.

#### OUR REPLY.

(1) The important point was to know whether Mr. Chapman's alleged quotation came from the section of the address to the Communist League which dealt with the tactics to be pursued in helping the capitalist class to power, or from the section which dealt with the ensuing period after the capitalists had gained control. Until I had from Mr. Chapman the correct wording it was impossible to tell from which section he was quoting. As I have twice pointed out, Marx does not urge the use of armed force for the latter period.

(2) Mr. Chapman quotes from the "Labour Monthly" what purports to be a letter from Marx to Kugelmann. This letter, says Mr. Chapman, is about "the policy of smashing instead of conquering the Political Machine." He then quotes from the letter and fails to observe that Marx does not even mention the "political machinery." Mr. Chapman evidently did not trouble to look up the last chapter in the "18th Brumaire" to which Marx refers. If he will refer to page 142 (Kerr's edition, 1914), he will see that Marx describes the "tremendous bureaucratic and military organisation" of the then French Government. It is this which must be destroyed, not the political machinery itself. In the last chapter of the "18th Brumaire," as in all the other passages and works referred to by Mr. Chapman in this and previous letters, there is no statement made by Marx which will support Mr. Chapman's policy of fighting the armed forces of the State, as distinct from gaining control of the political machinery.

Mr. Chapman instances Radetzky to prove that the workers need not obtain control of the political machinery, and of the armed forces of the capitalist state. As usual, Mr. Chapman ignores most of the deciding factors of the situation. He forgets that the revolutionaries failed; and that Radetzky was in command of the only effective army in Austria; that the Austrian

Emperor had never relinquished power, and had only made certain concessions to the Viennese revolutionaries (including the dismissal of Metternich) expressly at Radetzky's instruction because the latter rightly considered that the Viennese were not worth serious consideration and could be dealt with at leisure; that Radetzky's troops were fully engaged in the much more serious business of the war with Piedmont; and that the revolutionary committee represented no one outside Vienna and only a minority of the Viennese. As soon as the Italian war was settled, the Viennese revolutionaries were dealt with without the least difficulty.

Thus, the Emperor who controlled the political machinery of the Empire (except temporarily in Vienna itself) and the only effective armed forces, defeated the rebels. This, says Mr. Chapman, proves that the workers can use armed force against the capitalist class who control the political machinery and the only armed force. We fail to follow Mr. Chapman's reasoning.

(3) The proletariat in Germany in 1850 were not faced with the same problem as faces the workers in Great Britain now. They were a small minority and their task was to aid the capitalists to destroy the feudal monarchy. How could they "overthrow the bourgeoisie" when the bourgeoisie were not yet in power? The workers here are the great majority, and their task is to destroy capitalism, not to put the capitalists into power.

(4) In 1926 there was no "general strike" of a Socialist working-class. The working-class were then and are now overwhelmingly anti-Socialist; only a small minority (about 25 per cent.) were organised in trade unions, and only a minority of these were on strike. The workers had not voted Socialist and been faced with the revolt of a capitalist minority. On the contrary, they had in 1924 placed the capitalist class in possession of the political machinery and the armed forces. There is no "sham" at all about the support given by the great majority of the workers to capitalist candidates. It is an unfortunate fact.

I do not know what is meant by "a Bourgeoisie Military Dictatorship Stratocracy," and cannot therefore say whether Baldwin's Government is one or not.

(5) The capitalist class do not abolish the suffrage because the problems of the capi-



talist system compel them to adopt representative government as a basis for the administration of capitalism.

We might retort with an equally silly "poser": "If arms could emancipate the workers, the tyrants in power would have abolished them years ago."

The truth is that the capitalists cannot disregard the needs of their own system. Armed forces and the franchise are equally necessary to the administration of capitalism.

(6) As Mr. Chapman denies that the control of the political machinery can be obtained by the vote, the onus certainly is on him to show how it can be done; or how Socialism can be achieved without it.

(7) It is our aim to make our position "childishly simple," so that it may be understood by every worker. We have certainly failed to make it understandable to Mr. Chapman. We do not say to the workers, "all you have to do is just put a cross on a ballot paper." We say that the workers must first understand Socialism, then organise politically, and then use the vote to gain control of the political machinery. After securing control, "everything in the garden will not be lovely." Only then, in fact, will the real and enormous task of changing the economic basis of Society begin.

We do not under-estimate the enormous obstacles in the path to Socialism. The greatest obstacle is to get the workers to understand and want Socialism. If we were ever likely to forget how difficult a work that is, we always have the Mr. Chapmans to remind us.

H.

**NOW ON SALE.**

## MANIFESTO

OF

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

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## THE TREACHERY OF LEADERS.

### A SECOND REPLY TO A CRITIC.

To the Editor of the SOCIALIST STANDARD.

Hornsey.

(1) Your statement that "Socialists, like any other beings, cannot escape the pressure of the forces surrounding them, and there is no reason to believe that Socialists would be more trustworthy than other people, except that they at least understand the social forces, and may be expected to avoid gross blunders," bears out my contention that Parliament would offer the same inducement to modify their tune to S.P.G.B.'s as it has done to Labourites.

(2) It is through no gift of prophetic vision that I hold that the Capitalist class will make use of every weapon to stifle Socialist teaching should it be winning supporters. To-day, sheer force is used to suppress anything that threatens, even minutely, their class interests:—The Colonial oppression, the Great War, imprisonment of agitators, and the E.P.A. are witnesses to the fact that still harsher methods would be used to strangle the Socialist Party should it ever look like becoming dangerous.

Parliamentarism and constitutional action leaves the workers unprepared for this. Capitalists will not interfere with the gradual growth of Socialism, they are led to believe, and will unresistingly, in accordance with the code of sportsmanship, accede to the enactments (the King not daring as head of the Constitution to veto them) that means their expropriation.

(3) The S.P.G.B. to become the preponderating party in Parliament must pass through the phase of second party. There is no sudden conversion that you speak of, when the S.P.G.B. becomes the strongest party during the office of an anti-Socialist government. The Capitalist government can keep the Socialists waiting for years, and, knowing the constitutional law-abiding character of the Party, feel safe in adding another ten to fifteen years to their life.

(4) Your Party, in such respects, is up in the clouds. These things have got to be faced. To speak about generals and officers as workers is to apply abstract economic categories to existing conditions without any attempt to allow for the modifying factors of the psychology of the men concerned, and their close connection with the Capitalist class.

They are used to ordering workers about, and it is well known the hatred they have for Parliamentary interference. The question of how will the officers and generals act when instructed by a Socialist War Minister, is like that of what shall we do if the sun drops from the sky. The two are possibilities too remote to trouble about. The S.P.G.B. will never get so far as a Government unless it intends to legislate for the Capitalists.

(5) I offer at the moment, no alternative to your policy of following the constitutional path as pointed out to you by the Capitalists. Your readers have only to think deeply and face up to unpleasant facts and alternatives will suggest themselves to them.

Thanking you for answering my previous letter,  
Yours fraternally,  
R. M. PHILLIPS.

### OUR REPLY.

(1) The question is not whether Socialist M.P.'s would be offered inducements to modify their attitude, but whether the electors would tolerate such modification. Labour electors do not want capitalism overthrown, and therefore do not object to their M.P.'s non-Socialist politics and actions. Socialist electors would object and would enforce their wishes.

(2) Mr. Phillips here makes the error of assuming that the actions of the capitalist class are synonymous with their wishes. We do not urge the workers to rely upon the "code of sportsmanship" or the voluntary adherence of the capitalist class to "constitutionalism." The capitalist class maintained the parliamentary system because the problems of capitalism compelled them to do so. The majority of the English capitalist class are well aware of the limitations and dangers of using force openly against discontented workers. They use, and are likely to continue to use, the much more effective weapon of propaganda in the schools, the newspapers, etc. When they use force now they can still defend themselves by the plea that they have the majority of the electors supporting them. When that plea has been undermined (i.e., when the majority of the electors are Socialist) the capitalist class will have to yield or be faced with the problem of trying to administer capitalism by military force, against a hostile majority of the population. That problem is insoluble, not (as Mr. Phillips thinks we believe) because of any scruples of the capitalists, but because of the nature of modern industry and trade, and the complexity of the administration of capitalism.

(3) Mr. Phillips forgets that the capitalist class, being human beings and desiring to go on living, will not be prepared to pay any price, however great, in order to have the satisfaction of blocking the way to Socialism. When the working-class have become predominantly Socialist, and are organised politically and economically on class lines, they will be easily able to obstruct the normal working of capitalism. The majority of the capitalist class, faced with the alternative of yielding to the wishes of the majority of society, or of entering into a period of continued industrial and administrative chaos, will certainly choose the former.

(4) Mr. Phillips said (June SOCIALIST

STANDARD): "The generals, officers, bureaucrats, etc. . . . are drawn from the ranks of the capitalist class and its lackeys."

In reply I pointed out that this is not true. Being dependent on their pay for their livelihood, the great majority of these persons are members of the working-class. Mr. Phillips now agrees that they are members of the working-class, but says that I made no attempt to allow for the "psychology of the men concerned." By this he means, apparently, that these people, although members of the working-class, do not recognise their class position and are not Socialists. This is perfectly true, but in this respect these people are in no essential way different from other sections of the working-class. The great majority of all workers are still ignorant of their class position, and are not Socialists. As regards those members of the working-class who are army officers, civil servants, etc., the majority, even apart from acquiring greater knowledge of their class position, will act in accordance with their bread and butter interests, i.e., they will take orders from the authorities who control the political machinery and their pay.

Mr. Phillips makes a statement that the "S.P.G.B. will never get so far as a Government unless it intends to legislate for the capitalists." The meaning is obscure, and he gives no evidence or explanation whatever. What we can reply with confidence is that when the working-class are organised in a Socialist Party they will take control of the political machinery with the object not of legislating for the capitalists, but for the introduction of Socialism.

(5) Mr. Phillips, like other critics, here exposes the hollowness of his case. He makes the elementary error of supposing that a policy is proved unsound if difficulties can be mentioned. He forgets that every policy and every action, great or small, has to deal with some difficulty or other. The only test is to compare the practicability of one policy with that of an alternative, and weigh up the respective advantages and disadvantages. Instead of doing this, Mr. Phillips offers no alternative, but naively assures us that our readers "have only to think deeply . . . and alternatives will suggest themselves."

May we ask Mr. Phillips to believe that dead and living members of the Socialist



Party have thought deeply before offering the S.P.G.B. Declaration of Principles, and so far none of our critics has succeeded in discovering a practicable alternative.

H.

## THE TRANSITION TO SOCIALISM.

A REPLY TO FRED MONTAGUE, M.P.

Mr. Montague, Labour M.P. and editor of the "Social-Democrat," asks us a number of questions in the June issue of that journal. By an oversight our reply was omitted from the July SOCIALIST STANDARD. We give below in full the paragraphs which explain Mr. Montague's point of view.

### (1) QUESTIONS FOR "THE SOCIALIST STANDARD."

Discussing the subject of Communist doctrine, "The Socialist Standard" describes the statement that "The workers must destroy the capitalist state and set up their own workers' state" as dangerous romanticism, leading not to Socialism but to the shambles. We agree. And we agree also with "The Socialist Standard" that it is nonsense to say that Marx and Engels gave support to the advocacy of violence beyond what appears in a purple passage or two to "round off an occasional peroration." But if the idea of the destroying of the capitalist state and setting up a workers' state is dangerous romanticism, what is the idea of leaving transitional politics alone? Of two things one, surely! Either revolutionary overthrow, which seems to agree with the Communist position, or transformation of such a character that at no point is the stability of society threatened. As a matter of interest and not of mere debate we invite "The Socialist Standard" to examine this point.

### (2) THE LOGIC OF IT.

Does any Socialist worthy of the appellation "scientific" imagine that capitalism will end one Saturday night and Socialism begin one Monday morning? Members of the S.P.G.B. are strong on logic. Will any responsible member answer the following points? Suppose it is agreed, as we agree, that nationalisation is only another form of capitalism, and that social reform, as we do not altogether agree, is not worth troubling about. Imagine that a satisfactory majority of class-conscious Socialists are one day returned to Parliament. Socialism is declared by the representatives of the working class. What then? Do the workers carry on and, if so, where and how? For instance, will goods be made for export and trade carried on in automatic continuation of the old machinery until Parliament creates an entirely new organisation? Is it seriously contended that no period of transition will be required, and if it is not so contended is it unreasonable to ask what is to guarantee the efficiency of that diminishing area of production still in the hands of none too sympathetic capitalists during that period?

### (3) WHAT THE CHANGE MEANS.

Nationalisation is only another form of capi-

talism, but transition means the same thing whoever may be in charge of Parliament. It is not a question of whether the change from one system to another is to be slow or rapid. If the machinery of production, distribution, and foreign exchange is to be taken over as a going concern with a view to socialisation an enormous amount of complicated administrative work will have to be done afterwards, involving, for one thing, tremendous displacement of labour in the closing down of parasitical trades. It may seem a small point, but are shopkeepers, small as well as large, to carry on as private capitalists until a Socialist system of co-operative distribution has been created? Or is it proposed to have the plans for socialisation ready beforehand? Who will have these plans, and how can they be prepared beforehand without participation in and knowledge of pre-Socialist administration? It is not to the point that workers run the capitalist system now. That might be an argument for syndicalists, but it is not one for Socialists. Scientific Socialism means, besides economic and historical theory, Socialism scientifically applied, otherwise we might as well leave the workers to run the capitalist system. And as this tremendous piece of work is being done, are capitalists going to oblige by running things for our convenience whilst awaiting execution?

### (4) WEALTH OF A KIND.

One point that came out of the Maxton-Fitzgerald debate is also worth a little extra consideration. "Under Socialism" wealth will be so plentiful that monetary system will be unnecessary and would be absurd, therefore Socialism cannot mean equal remuneration or socialisation of the means of exchange. We have no quarrel with that, but go easy about the plentiful supply. Plentiful supply of what? Iron girders, aluminium pots, baby's basinettes, or Brummagem idols for Ballabaloo? All these things come into the term "wealth," and are included in potential production. Have we a likely plentiful supply of food? Do necessary raw materials materialise like the famous Katie King? Are cotton, wool, leather, wood and tobacco available "like water"? With more countries in the world than ever producing what they want for themselves this repudiation of "exchange" may acquire a sinister meaning. The fact is, the "plentiful supply" of means of enjoyment is child's talk unless we are sure of exchanging our goods for the food and raw materials we want. There is plenty in the world, we know, but is non-transitional Socialism possible the world over at the same moment? If not, what allowances and modifications are admissible, and if capitalistic exceptions are to be made in any way, what logical objection is there to nationalisation?

## OUR REPLY.

WHAT IS THE TRANSITION PERIOD?

(1) Although Mr. Montague asks a number of questions, most of the points of difference between him and us can be traced back to his use of the term "transition

period." What is the transition period? We live now in a capitalist economic system with the capitalist class in control of the political machinery and the armed forces of society. They make laws and enforce them, laws which are always framed within the limits imposed by the nature of capitalism and (so far as these limits permit) always directly in their interests as capitalists. *When, and not before, the working-class, organised for Socialism, have gained control of the political machinery, the transition period will begin.* The working-class cannot begin the work of abolishing the present private property basis of society until they have obtained political control from the capitalist class.

Mr. Montague holds a fundamentally different, and as we consider, a fundamentally false view. He asks (paragraph 1): "What is the idea of leaving transitional politics alone?"

Our answer is plain. We shall not leave "transitional politics" alone, but what Mr. Montague has in mind as "transitional politics" are merely the politics of capitalist reform now carried on by him and his party. We are not in the "transition period," the workers have not obtained political control, and the advocacy of nationalisation and other reforms is not work towards Socialism or towards the capture of political control for Socialism.

(2) Mr. Montague here agrees that "nationalisation is only another form of capitalism." It is then for him to justify his support of nationalisation. He must be quite familiar with our opposition based on the contention that it will not benefit the working-class under capitalism.

Mr. Montague's further questions about foreign trade are presumably based on the assumption that Socialism can be established in Great Britain alone. It certainly cannot. Socialism will be international, and cannot be other than international.

(3) Most of the points in this paragraph depend on Mr. Montague's view of "transitional politics," and are answered above in my reply to his first paragraph. We deny his statement that "transition means the same thing whoever may be in charge of Parliament." Socialists do not deny or under-estimate the difficulties of the economic transformation to Socialism, but the difficulties of the period *after* the conquest of power have no relation to the policy of

supporting capitalist reforms *before* the conquest of power.

(4) Here Mr. Montague deals further with the economic problems which will face the workers after they have obtained political control. They will, for instance, have to cease the production of articles no longer required, and produce instead larger quantities of certain goods the supply of which is at present too small. Similar problems were solved in 1914. Mr. Montague (who actively participated as private, as First Lieutenant and as recruiting agent) will know how the Government withdrew men from industrial production in order to build up a great machine for slaughtering their fellow-workers in other countries. They also solved the problem of turning out munitions and then, in 1919, they reversed the process when the weapons of destruction were no longer needed in such huge quantities.

Krupp did not personally conduct the similar change-over in Germany from howitzers to harvesters in the factories bearing his name; the change-over, like capitalist production and distribution in general, was carried through by workers. We cannot, therefore, see why Mr. Montague should doubt our ability to do for ourselves what we now do for the capitalists.

Mr. Montague's other difficulties arise again out of his two misconceptions: first, that the transition to Socialism is already going on while the capitalists are still in power, and secondly, that Socialism can be introduced on a national basis, requiring capitalist trade to continue between the national groups. Under Socialism there will be no trade, home or foreign, individual or collective.

H.

## KNOWLEDGE.

The following Books can be obtained from Head Office:—

Anarchism and Socialism. Plechanoff. 3/6, paper 1/2.

Civil War in France. Marx. 2/9.

Conditions of the Working Class in England in 1844.

Engels. 5/-

Critique of Political Economy. Marx. 6/6.

18th Brumaire of Louis Napoleon. Marx. 3/6.

Evolution of Property. Lafargue. 3/6, limp 1/6.

Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State. Engels. 3/6.

Poverty of Philosophy. Marx. 6/6.

Revolution and Counter-Revolution. Marx. 3/6, limp 1/6.

Social and Philosophical Studies. Lafargue. 3/6.

Socialism: Utopian and Scientific. Engels. 3/6, limp 1/6. Postage extra.



**OFFICIAL NOTICE.**

All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 17, Mount Pleasant, London, W.C.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

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**The Socialist Standard,**

AUGUST, 1928

**KEIR HARDIE AND THE WORLD WAR.**

In the July issue of the SOCIALIST STANDARD, we remarked, in passing, that Keir Hardie supported the world war in 1914.

"Forward" (July 14th), in reply to a correspondent says "This is nonsense." As it is the fashion among communists, and "left wing" Labourites to pretend that Keir Hardie was essentially different from the men with whom he associated in the Labour Party and the I.L.P., we give below the evidence on which our statement is based.

With regard to Keir Hardie's attitude in general, it would be interesting to learn from the Communists and others who now worship him, why he continued to work with the Labour Party and the I.L.P. if he differed fundamentally from their advocacy of reforms of capitalism. The only important difference between Keir Hardie and MacDonald and Henderson is that he is dead and they are not.

**SOCIALISM AND WAR.**

The Socialist attitude to capitalist wars is simple. We seek the abolition of capitalism, of the wages system. In Germany and England the workers were wage-slaves before 1914, and are wage-slaves still. They

are wage-slaves in victory and in defeat. Capitalist nations go to war because capitalist interests are at stake. The workers stand to gain nothing, and they risk losing life and limb. There was, in 1914, no interest at stake justifying the sacrifice of a single worker's life.

Keir Hardie, Ramsay MacDonald and the Labour Party generally, held the view that the workers have something else at stake which is worth defending, *i.e.*, their country. They hold the same view now. They still urge the workers to defend "their" country, although the "country" belongs, not to them, but to their exploiters.

Not being Socialists, MacDonald and Keir Hardie and their associates never at any time took up the Socialist attitude to the war. They decided the question in the light of their view of the duty of the workers to defend national independence.

**OUR INTERESTS AS A NATION.**

Thus in the "Labour Leader" (official organ of the I.L.P.) for August 6th, 1914, Keir Hardie, in an editorial, wrote as follows:—

Many of us hoped, though some of us feared, that the Government would remain steadfast to the end, and refuse to be drawn into the conflict unless our interests as a nation should be directly attacked.

So Keir Hardie was prepared to support war if "our interests as a nation should be directly attacked." The attitude of the Socialist is quite different. We ask not about "our interests as a nation" (which means in practice the interests of those who own and control the nation, *i.e.*, the capitalist class), but about our interests as workers. We knew then quite well, and we think Keir Hardie also knew quite well that the capitalist class do not go to war because someone or other is directly attacking the interests of the working-class.

Keir Hardie went further a few months later. In the "Merthyr Pioneer" (August 21st, 1914) he said:—

Any war of aggression against the rights and liberties of my country I would persist in to the last drop of blood in my veins.

**KEIR HARDIE—RECRUITING AGENT.**

It seems that he soon became convinced that "our interests as a nation" had been directly attacked, for in the "Merthyr Pioneer" on November 27th, he wrote:—

I have never said or written anything to dissuade our young men from enlisting; I know

too well all that there is at stake . . . . and not only did he give an assurance that he had not tried to discourage enlistment; he boasted that his efforts at recruiting had been more successful than those of his Liberal opponent.

The same article ("Merthyr Pioneer," November 27th) goes on:—

If I can get the recruiting figures for Merthyr week by week, which I find is a very difficult job, I hope by another week to prove (Keir Hardie's italics) that whereas our Rink meeting gave a stimulus to recruiting, those meetings at the Drill Hall at which the Liberal member or the Liberal candidate spoke had exactly the opposite effect.

**A QUESTION TO "FORWARD."**

We see, therefore, that Keir Hardie held that the workers ought to fight for national independence, and in defence of "national interests," and he urged them to join the army for that purpose. "Forward" (which itself throughout the war allowed regular contributors to carry on propaganda in its pages in support of the cause of the Allied capitalists) describes our original statement as "nonsense." In face of the evidence, will the Editor of "Forward" admit his error, or allow us to give the evidence in his columns?

**THE AIMS OF THE I.L.P.****A FURTHER REPLY TO A CORRESPONDENT.**

Dear Comrades, Catford, S.E.6.

I am sorry I was not able to continue our debate in time for the May number of the "Standard." However, if you will tolerate a final letter, I should like to reply to two of the points you raise.

(1) You challenge me to quote from I.L.P. literature that the I.L.P. aims at Socialism. Here are four quotations taken at random:—

(a) From the Constitution of the I.L.P.:

*Object.*—Establishment of Socialist Commonwealth.

The Socialist Commonwealth is that state of society in which land and capital are communally owned and the processes of production, distribution and exchange are social functions.

(b) From Fred. Henderson's Case for Socialism, Chap. II. (Reprinted as a pamphlet by I.L.P.) The whole chapter explains the Socialist outlook on confiscation of "private" property, *e.g.*, "Socialists advocate the expropriation of the landed and capitalist class, the deprivation of their way of living; and the organisation of the wealth-producing activities of the nation by nation itself, by the whole people acting in civic co-operation, for the benefit of all the citizens and members of the nation" (pages 31-32).

(c) From a leaflet "Socialism—What it is—What it is not." (published by I.L.P.) "Socialism is the ownership of the means of life by the people and for the people."

(d) From "Keir Hardie's Socialism"—Francis Johnson (published by I.L.P.). Object of I.L.P.: "To secure the collective ownership of all the means of production, distribution and exchange." (Page 6.)

(2) I appreciated the "Salvation Army" joke—both in the original (Engel's "Socialism," p. 11), and in your use of the reference on p. 27, but I was annoyed at "my loose method of argument" because I said "Marx and Engels maintain," etc. In the introduction to Engel's book he explains how the book came to be written and how it expresses "the views held by Marx and myself on this great variety of subjects," etc. (page 4). The number of times Engels used "we" instead of "I" must be hundreds. "H" is guilty of a lie to score a point—a genuine Socialist would not stoop to that.

Yours fraternally,  
H. W. R. KEEBLE.

**OUR REPLY.**

(1) (a) If Mr. Keeble will refer to the June SOCIALIST STANDARD, he will see that Mr. Maxton, Chairman of the I.L.P., agrees with us that "communal ownership of capital" is not Socialism, but a meaningless phrase.

(b) Mr. Fred Henderson's writings are not the official policy of the I.L.P., but merely his private opinions.

(c) Mr. Keeble forgets that both the I.L.P. and the Labour Party (as we have repeatedly shown from their official publications) regard State Capitalism or Nationalisation, which still permit bondholders to live by owning property, as being "ownership by the people."

(d) The quotation from Keir Hardie merely bears out our contention in (c). Under Socialism there will be common ownership of the means of production and distribution. There can be no "exchange" except under a private property system.

H.

Contributions are earnestly invited to assist us with the expense of publishing more literature.

**YOUR** newsagent can obtain the "Socialist Standard" through the wholesalers, W. H. Smith & Son. Ask him to get your copy, but if you have any difficulty send direct to 17, Mount Pleasant, London, W.C.1.



### SOCIALISM SMASHED AGAIN.

A correspondent has sent us a cutting from the "Daily Express" of July 2nd, with a request that we answer it. The cutting is an article entitled "J. D. Beresford Tried Socialism But Found It Wanting—Too Much." Then follows a portrait of the author's face and a picture of his mind. Neither is flattering. The article is too long to quote in full, and the reader must accept our assurance that we will summarise Mr. Beresford's "points" as fairly as muddled sentiment can be summarised.

First, then, he became a convinced Socialist, for a time, more than twenty years ago, through reading one or two of H. G. Wells' books.

Perhaps we can conveniently pause here and clear away a little brushwood. H. G. Wells is not a Socialist. To a Socialist, his political utterances have been puerile. He has repeatedly confused municipal capitalism and nationalisation with Socialism and believes in the rule of the expert and the bureaucrat. He supported the late War. Wells foams at the mouth whenever the name of Marx is mentioned. Marx, who raised Socialism from the realms of sentiment to those of science.

And now we reach the final stage. "My true argument against Socialism is founded on . . . first, the present state of human nature; and second, our regard for its development." So that is his *true* argument. Poor old human nature! Dear! oh dear!! The number of times the "human nature" tag has been used is past all counting. What is human nature, anyway? Like all the flat, tepid tribe who use the phrase, Mr. Beresford makes no attempt to define it. He proceeds to false prophecy right away:—

But your average man or woman under fifty would be bored stiff by life in a Socialist State. There would be no outlet for ambition, no delicious hope from week to week that next year we might be in a better position than we are to-day.

With our eternally fixed income, our everlastingly regulated work and leisure, most of us would find no outlet for our surplus activity other than in quarrelling with our neighbours. There is certainly a minority of people who are content with flat monotony. . . . But not the majority. Ours is not the right kind of climate for that sort of life. In the south of France, or in Italy, it might be more endurable.

Gawd save us from that. One wants to

walk through the dung-strewn streets of Bermondsey to see what joys Socialism means to destroy. The streets are alive with adventure. Narrow, foetid thoroughfares are thronged with thousands of kiddies. Their taste for adventure seems fairly divided between dodging the motor lorries they can see and the bacteria they cannot. Fortunately, Guy's Hospital is on the spot, so that quite a number avoid the flat monotony of a tombstone, and grow up to be carmen, pickle workers, hide scrapers, tanners, gutter merchants, truck pushers, and other outlets for ambition. Not for them the eternally fixed income, the everlastingly regulated work and leisure. Bless you, no! They are bung full of the delicious hope from week to week that next year they may be better off than they are to-day. Hope seems to be all they are full of. Many exchange it for hops when occasion offers, and, curiously enough, seem happier for it. But what should be still more curious to Mr. Beresford is that if one of the denizens of Bermondsey heard of a monotonous, constant job, with an eternally fixed income, and even everlastingly regulated work and leisure, say, as a porter on the gate of Guy's Hospital, he would throw all the glorious possibilities of a fugitive to-morrow to the four winds and grab the job. Will any reader of the "Daily Express" blame him?

"Another point," we learn, "that the Socialists avoid with a shrug of the shoulders is that of invention." As we said before, Mr. Beresford should read more. If the Socialists he has met have confined themselves to shrugging their shoulders, it is obvious he has been unfortunate or indiscriminating in his acquaintance. One cannot shrug the shoulders in print, and if there is one point that Socialists have dealt with in extenso it is that of invention. It is one of Capitalism's black chapters. If Mr. Beresford read even the newspapers to which he contributes he would know that the inventors that Capitalism made use of in the Great War are still fighting for their rewards in the Courts. One, only a fortnight ago, complained that his legal expenses already have exceeded his original claim. Capitalism has one test for invention, as it has for most other things—is there money in it?

The remainder of Mr. Beresford's article is really too vapid for anything. Under

Socialism—appalling thought—"our daily newspapers would have been limited to a single and, no doubt, dull sheet." We cherish the consolation that it could not be flatter than his article, anyway. It proclaims the fact that when Mr. Beresford uses the word Socialism he does not know what he is talking about. Like all the profoundest truths in existence, the elementary case for Socialism can be reduced to a few simple, self-evident statements. Only blindness, prejudice, ignorance and selfishness stand in the way of its realisation. Listen to this:—

The following are mankind's prime necessities: Air, water, food, shelter and clothing. Without air we should die in a few minutes; without water, in a few days. Socialism simply means that food, shelter and clothing, etc., shall be supplied similarly without question or condition; that they shall not be the sport of profit-makers, that access to them shall not be through a gate bearing the sign, Profit First." Without the necessities of life we die. To obtain them we hire ourselves for a period to those who own the means whereby we live. How do they make and retain themselves masters of our lives? By force and custom. We propose to dissolve the first by converting a majority to our opinion, and at an Election taking control of the machinery of government. We propose to vary the second by substituting common ownership of the masses whereby we all live, for private ownership of them. When people thoroughly understand these simple facts, we venture to think they will chance the monotony of regular and choice food, the boredom of roomy houses instead of stuffy hutches, the tameness of plentiful clothing instead of shoddy and patches. Perhaps Mr. Beresford could recommend the great tonic value of the present system to the 200,000 mine workers whose unemployment the "Daily News" says (July 24th) "is not a temporary difficulty but a permanent condition; they are definitely and irrecoverably surplus to the industry." What a chance for Mr. Beresford to explain to them the joys of not knowing from week to week whether they will be better off next year or no! And there are the other happy million of unemployed who would welcome the joyous gospel. And perhaps they would not.

Anyhow, Mr. Beresford can be reassured on one point. Socialism will not abolish

hurricanes, earthquakes, tornados, blizzards and other natural hazards. There will be nearly as many opportunities for the adventurous to risk their necks as now. We can suggest at least a score under Socialism that will be more spicily adventurous than writing for the "Daily Express."

W. T. H.

### THE COMMUNISTS' REFORM POLICY.

"The fight against MacDonaldism should be advanced on the lines of unemployment being made a national responsibility with a definite scale of relief; for pensions at the age of 55 years, on a scale something similar to that suggested for the unemployed; the immediate nationalisation of the credit system and the basic industries (banks, Insurance companies, electricity generating supply, mines and transport, cotton and woollen textiles, and the rapidly developing artificial silk industry)."

The above appears in the "Workers' Life" (July 6th), as Communist Party's demands for the Cook-Maxton alliance to adopt as their programme.

Nationalisation of public utilities, etc., means State-ownership with the capitalists in control and capitalism being carried on.

This demand, together with the scales of relief for unemployed and pensions shows the utter hypocrisy and cant in the Communist attacks upon the I.L.P. which are made in Palme Dutt's "Socialism and the Living Wage." This book, written for and published by the Communist Party, says:

The workers will not be tricked into the fight for Socialism. Certainly the propaganda of Socialism must start from the simplest daily needs of life of men, women and children, and the failure of capitalism to meet those needs. But at the same time it must be shown that no short cut can find the way out, no magic panaceas of pretended reforms, money-control or other trickeries, but only the conquest of the means of production by the working class, and, therefore, as the necessary condition of this, the overthrow of capitalist class power and conquest of power by the working class; and it must be shown that this class struggle will involve heavy fighting and sacrifice, demanding the strongest discipline and solidarity of the working class.

A. K.

We are proposing to publish a new pamphlet, but we cannot do so until we have the money. If we print 20,000 copies the cost will be in the neighbourhood of £100. We ask, therefore, for donations. As soon as we get sufficient to justify giving the order to our printer we shall be pleased to proceed.



## SOCIALISTS AND ROTA COMMITTEES.

### ANSWER TO "REVOLUTIONIST."

We have received from "Revolutionist" a long, rambling and confused letter in which he complains that we have not answered his previous questions. As has already been explained, we receive far too many letters for it to be possible to print them and answer them in the SOCIALIST STANDARD. We, of course, must decide whether any subject dealt with by a correspondent is of sufficient interest to our readers to warrant insertion of a reply to a letter, and moreover, we cannot undertake to print lengthy letters in full. If "Revolutionist" will be brief and to the point we will try to answer his questions. His last letter was neither brief nor to the point, and we answered what we supposed was the main question at issue.

He objects to a member of the S.P.G.B. sitting on a Rota Committee because he "must ask such questions as 'are you genuinely seeking employment?'"

As this statement is untrue, "Revolutionist" must be unaware of what a member of a Rota Committee must do.

"Revolutionist" is quite willing to receive "charity" from a Board of Guardians because "it is a linking chain in workers' lives to-day." But he will only receive "charity" from the Guardians when he applies for it. To obtain this he must state his case, argue his needs, compromise about the amount he will receive, etc.

He must do, in fact, those things which he condemns in a member of a Rota Committee.

The simple fact is that *everyone*, whether in work or out, helps to administer the capitalist system. The only escape is by suicide.

On the original point about local government, our position is plain, we invite votes from Socialists on a Socialist programme, that and nothing else. We continue to propagate Socialism, telling the workers that no change in the administration of capitalism, either locally or nationally, will raise them from their subject position in society.

Ed., Com.

## THE COMMUNISTS AND THE TRUSTS.

"The Communist Party declares that such trusts and combines can only be successfully fought by initiating an energetic price war."

The above is the advice tendered to the Co-op. Societies by the Communist Party ("Workers' Weekly," July 6th). The particular trusts referred to are the drapery and cotton combines. Poor Teddy Roosevelt years ago had an election slogan, "Bust the Trusts," but he demanded State Control as the means. The Communists have a simpler method—"lower prices"! While economic evolution inevitably causes competition to lead to monopoly, these Trust Busters—Capitalist or Communist—are doomed to failure. But it is somewhat pathetic to see the so-called Revolutionary Communists advocate a "remedy" which the Trusts themselves have used to "bust" would-be competitors. And the notion that Co-ops. can *sustain* lower prices than international trusts with large resources to gamble with—well, to say the least, the idea belongs to petty bourgeois and small shopkeepers' "economics." How are lower prices going to benefit the working class, whose wages are based on the cost of living?

A. K.

## THE I.L.P.'S CONFESSION.

The I.L.P. is certainly not committed to advocating "the overthrow of the Capitalist system." Its "Socialism in Our Time" programme (and I think I have done a little to defend it against its critics) is a carefully reasoned out programme which, as the I.L.P. states in its resolution, "aims at the immediate raising of the standard of life of the working classes and the transference of the key sources of power within Capitalism to the community." That is a line of policy which does not mean the "overthrow of the Capitalist system."

The Acting Editor of "Forward"—the I.L.P. journal—writes the above in the issue of July 7th. It is a very candid and timely confession on the part of these gentlemen of the I.L.P. that they do not stand for the overthrow of the Capitalist System. "The immediate raising of the standard of life" is one of those general phrases which will easily fit into any reformer's programme and means practically nothing.

## MR. GUY ALDRED AND THE S.P.G.B.

In the July issue of the "Commune," the editor, Mr. Guy Aldred, writes on the subject of his opposition to the S.P.G.B. In doing so, he makes the statement that the S.P.G.B. refuses to debate with him. This is false, and Mr. Aldred knows it to be so.

He knows quite well that our platform at all our ordinary propaganda meetings is open to him, as to any other opponent of Socialism, to state his case and oppose ours. We cannot admit Mr. Aldred's claim to greater consideration than this. We cannot, for instance, allow him or any other opponent to dictate to us that we shall go to the expense of engaging a hall expressly to provide publicity for him. If we considered Mr. Guy Aldred's activities of sufficient importance to warrant this we should do it. We are always willing to debate with our opponents, but we, not they, will decide whether any particular opponent is of sufficient importance to justify special attention of the kind Mr. Aldred demands.

In the same issue Mr. Aldred denounces the holding of set debates such as the recent debate with Mr. Maxton, on the ground that the audience are debarred from participating. This is true, but the reason is obvious. If two opposing political parties are going to cover fully the differences between them, time does not permit of a full debate, and in addition questions and discussion from an audience of several thousand people. At our ordinary propaganda meetings this difficulty does not exist and questions and discussion and opposition are unrestricted. And as Mr. Aldred abhors set debates of this kind, why does he complain because of our refusal to arrange such a set debate with him? Mr. Aldred has also discovered an acid test by which to prove that our principles are unsound. He finds that we referred to Mr. Maxton as "Mr.," instead of calling him "Comrade" or "Maxton" or "Jimmy" or just plain James. This he says is "obsequious." We do not know whether Mr. Aldred will be indignant or flattered that we are equally "obsequious" to him. It is, moreover, distressing to see that Mr. Aldred is equally "obsequious." The same issue of the "Commune" contains a reference to "The Earl of Birkenhead." Why not plain "Birkenhead" or F. E. Smith?

Do you not think, Mr. Aldred, that it is really rather childish to attack the principles of a Party on such trivialities, as these?

In 1906 Mr. Aldred (although we used that fatal "Mr." even then) wrote telling us that he accepted "the revolutionary principles" of the S.P.G.B. and was leaving the S.D.F. and proposed to join us if we would accept him. A few days later he changed his mind and decided to remain in the S.D.F. in order to "use the S.D.F. platform for placing before members" his "revolutionary ideas." The letters were published in full in the "Socialist Standard" for November, 1906.

We only mention this because, after a lapse of 22 years, one of Mr. Aldred's supporters, claiming to speak on his behalf, now denies the authenticity of the letters. As Mr. Aldred has never informed us that he questions their authenticity, this supporter of his is obviously lying when he claims Aldred's endorsement of his action.

Various other criticisms of the S.P.G.B. by Mr. Aldred will be dealt with in a subsequent issue.

ED. COMM.

## POLITICAL MEANS TO ECONOMIC ENDS.

A. T. Rogers, of Turling (Essex), writes us a lengthy letter criticising our position. The essence of his objection is contained in the following two extracts:—

The powers of government are of no use to the workers, their disabilities are not political but economic, and therefore their fight is not a political fight but an economic one.

The power of the ruling class is based on the wealth produced by the people which is appropriated by the said class. Consequently to free themselves from this domination the people must refuse to yield up the fruit of their toil to their masters.

Our critic's error results from confusing the means with the end. While the end in view must be an economic one, it does not follow that the means to that end is an economic one also. The ruling class do not rule the workers simply because they are owners, but they are able to continue their rule and domination because they control the political machinery which gives them the protection necessary to maintain their position. The working-class, therefore, must get control of this same political machinery in order to get access to economic possession. The mere refusal of the



workers to give up the fruits of their toil is insufficient without the power to back up their refusal. Industrial action or striking does not bring the workers into possession, but leaves the owners in complete ownership of all the means of life. A general strike (which our friend supports in his letter) is a policy which brings the workers up against the full forces of government without in any way giving the workers any access to the means and instruments of production, or the wealth already produced.

Ed. Com.

## HERO WORSHIP.

A Conversation with a Visitor from Mars.

(Concluded.)

"Spartacus and Tyler are examples of 'good' leaders, men of courage, sincerity and ability; but history records far more examples of 'leaders' who have betrayed their followers. Indeed, the ruling class in all ages have employed agents to obtain positions of dominance in revolutionary movements that it might be warned of all plans and be prepared against sudden outbreaks. The movements of the Luddites (the name taken by a 'secret' organisation which sprang up when modern machinery was being introduced, its objects being to smash the machines which deprived them of their living as handicraftsmen) and the Chartists were made largely ineffective by such laudable stratagems. The last words spoken on the scaffold by Brandreth, one of the boldest of the Luddites, were: 'I have been betrayed by Oliver the Spy.' This same Oliver, by the way, was also instrumental in causing one of the best organized risings of the Chartists to be abortive. But the supreme tragedy of the Chartist movement, imbued with ideas of the necessity for leadership, was in the support given to its worst enemies—the liberal capitalists—lured by some of its followers by the latter's promises to gain for them their objects.

"In more recent times, Marty, it has been shown that often the most violent 'leaders' of secret revolutionary organizations are in reality secret police agents. Before the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, many such agents were proved to have urged bomb outrages against ministers and even to have committed such deeds themselves. The infamous Father Gapon, who

led the Russian workers to the terrible shambles at the Tsar's palace in St. Petersburg, Bogrov, who shot the premier Stolypin dead, and Azeff, one of the most influential of the 'social revolutionaries,' were proved to be such 'agents provocateurs.'

"So much for 'secret' movements and the part of 'hero-worship' in the disintegration of them, whilst for the workers this rule may be formulated: The penalty of trusting to others to do what can be done by themselves has been and always will be the same—trust and you will be 'trussed.'

"I have already pointed out, Marty, how capitalism has weakened the hold of genuine 'hero-worship,' and I now come to a factor which is tending to destroy the idea of 'leadership' in the workers' movements. The growth of industrial and political organizations professing to promote the interests of the workers has led to a wild scramble for 'jobs' in these bodies. Consequently, we see would-be 'leaders' seeking to shift the old well-entrenched 'leaders' by every kind of denunciation of their words and actions. Thus 'leader' succeeds 'leader' with bewildering rapidity, and the logical outcome of this sordid struggle must be the realization by the workers that all 'leaders' are equally useless to them in their march to emancipation. The use of 'catch words' and slogans many times repeated has become so familiar as to breed, if not contempt, at least a desire to see something resembling 'results.' Even oratory fails to convey the 'herd-thrill' to the same degree as in the past, and the old 'leaders' are retained only from sentimental feelings of attachment as one keeps an old pair of boots or a threadbare coat. These are hopeful signs, Marty, but only the realization by the workers of their slave position and the knowledge of the means to escape therefrom can finally dispel any fears as to their ability to dispense with 'leaders' and themselves organize for their own emancipation, which will involve the emancipation of all mankind by the setting up of the Universal Classless Republic wherein all will be free to enjoy (without the sanction of 'great' men) the entire bounty of the earth."

I had hoped that this peroration would have ended our conversation, but Marty has

the tenacity of a bulldog and the curiosity of a jackdaw.

"When Socialism is finally established and 'hero worship' no longer exists, what ideals do you conceive will produce the effects formerly obtained from personal idolatry—will sincere, able men continue to inspire others less endowed by Nature?"

"Your question, Marty," I replied, "is like that of the patient to the doctor: 'You have cured me of smallpox, what do you propose to put in its place?' However, assuming the rôle of the prophet, I shall attempt an answer. Under Socialism the people will be not only the producers of wealth but the owners of it. At the present time we are told by 'advanced' capitalists that in firms which allot a portion of the profit for division among the employees, the men work more eagerly, knowing that each will receive a large bonus if the 'common product' is increased, and become more vigilant and interested in their work. (Although, of course, these capitalists do not point out the fraud of the 'beneficial innovation,' the cheap increased output of the masters, the impaired health of the workers, the speedy glutting of the market and the resultant unemployment.) Also the experiments of Leclair and Godin show that inventiveness receives a stimulus by this supposed share in the common product. If a zeal is created by participation in a minute fraction of the 'common product,' how great a zeal will be inculcated in the independent-minded men who will possess in common the entire fruits of their labours—freed from the dominance of the master class. No longer in fear of losing their livelihood, no longer forced to toil the whole weary day in a frantic effort to secure the bare material necessities for sustaining life, each will have the opportunity to develop himself (or herself), physically and mentally, as a member of the Classless Republic. The increase in leisure will lead to a higher level of culture, while the desire to excel, then no longer necessary to be indulged at the expense of others, will be directed towards the betterment of the community. As to your question whether able men will still inspire men of less ability, the answer is that great deeds and thoughts will be acknowledged with approbation by the community, but reverential awe or idolatrous glorification must needs be absent in a

Commonwealth based on equality and not privilege."

At this point the Martian arose. "Thank you for your patient explanations," he said, "but I must now return for a season to my planet as the strain of your climate is too much for my Martian constitution." "Look me up when you are down here again," I replied. "For the present, *bon voyage*, and mind the skylight as you go out!"

W. J.

## RECEIVED FOR REVIEW.

- "Ten Years of Soviet Rule," by Rykov. (Labour Research Dept., 6d.)
- "The Mining Situation. An Immediate Programme." (Labour Publishing Dept., 2d.)
- "Hands off our Wages and Hours," by Z. Hutchinson. (Bacup Times, 2d.)
- "The Revolt of the Samoans." H. E. Holland, M.P. (Claite Book Depot, 1928, 6d.)

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## S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS

- LONDON DISTRICT.**
- Sundays** ... Clapham Common, 6 p.m.  
Tottenham, West Green Corner, 11.30 a.m.  
Tooting, Ganett Lane, Tooting Broadway, 7.30 p.m.  
Victoria Park, 4 p.m.
  - Mondays** ... Woolwich, Beresford Square, 7.30 p.m.  
Paddington, Prince of Wales, 8 p.m.  
Clerkenwell, Garnett Place, 8 p.m.  
Camberwell, Wren Road, 8 p.m.
  - Wednesdays** ... Hackney, Paragon Road and Mare Street, 8 p.m.
  - Thursdays** ... Becontree, Rodney Street, Ilford, 8 p.m.
  - Fridays** ... Clerkenwell, Acton St., Grays Inn Rd., 8 p.m.  
West Ham, Water Lane, 8 p.m.
  - Saturdays** ... Wood Green, Jolly Butchers Hill, 8 p.m.  
Leyton, Corner Grange Park, 7.30 p.m.
- HANLEY BRANCH.**
- Sundays** ... Hanley Market Square, 7 p.m.  
Burslem, St. John Square, 7 p.m.



## BRANCH DIRECTORY.

**BATTERSEA.**—Sec., 2, Hanbury-road, S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns-road. Discussion second Thurs. in month.

**BECONTREE.**—Sec., Hy. Gratton, 4, Drummond Ave., Brooklands, Romford. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 7.30, at above address.

**BETHNAL GREEN.**—Communications to D. Jacobs, 28, Lyl Road, Bow, E.3.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec. E. Jesper, 36, Rollason-rd., Erdington. Branch meets The Continental Café, Moor St., 1st and 3rd Sundays at 11 a.m.

**CAMBERWELL.**—Sec., J. Goodfellow, 40, Solon New Road, Clapham, S.W.4. Branch meets at Camberwell Trades Council Room, 6A, Artichoke Place, Camberwell Green, every Friday at 8.30 p.m. Discussions—public invited.

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

**CLERKENWELL.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at 17, Mount Pleasant, W.C.1. Discussions first Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.—all invited. Sec., at above address.

**EAST LONDON.**—Sec., A. Jacobs, 78 Eric-st., Mile-end, E.3. Branch meets first and third Mondays in month at above address.

**EAST HAM.**—Branch meets at 1, Tyrone-road, East Ham. Wednesdays at 8 p.m. Communications. Sec. at above address.

**HACKNEY.**—Branch meets The Old Gravel Pit Hall, Mare-street, Hackney, Mondays, 8 p.m., Discussions 9.30. Communication to Sec. as above.

**HANLEY.**—Branch meets Tuesdays, Working Men's Club, Glass-st. Sec., F. Goldstraw, 38, Paddock Street, Hanley.

**ISLINGTON.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 144, Seven Sister-rd., Holloway, N. Sec., M. Baker, 18, Orpingley-rd., N.7.

**LEYTON.**—Sec., A. Holland, 396, Lea Bridge-rd., Leyton. Branch meets 8 p.m., Trades and Labour Hall, Grove House, High-rd., every Monday. Public invited.

**MANCHESTER.**—Sec., W. Addison, 111, West Park-street, Salford, Manchester. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month, 7.45 p.m., at 114, Duke St., Stretford-road.

**PADDINGTON.**—Branch meeting held on 2nd and 4th Fridays, 8 p.m., in room above the Co-operative Stores, 306, Kilburn-lane, W.9 (side door).

**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Sec., J. Bird, 5 Welling-ton-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.

**TOOTING.**—Sec., 15, University-road, Collier's Wood, S.W. 19. Branch meets every Friday at 8 p.m. at Tooting Adult School, 971, Garratt-lane, S.W. 17.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Secretary, 18, Woodlands Park Rd., N 15. Branch meets Fridays, Room 2, Trades Hall, 7, Bruce Grove. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.

**WALTHAMSTOW.**—Sec., S. E. Williams, 3, Dyson-rd., Leytonstone, E.11. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.

**WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107 Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at Secretary's address.

**WEST HAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford rd., Stratford. Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

**WOOD GREEN.**—All communications to Sec., F. W. Godfrey, 71, Falkland Road, N.8.

**WOOLWICH.**—Branch meets at 94, Griffin Road, Plumstead. Communications to Secretary at above address.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interests of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great HOLDS— Britain

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.



# THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

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[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

## THE PROGRESS OF CAPITALISM IN RUSSIA.

The Socialist Party carries on in this country propaganda *for* Socialism and *against* Capitalism. At the same time it does not disapprove of the efforts to build up Capitalism in Russia. To those who are unacquainted with the Socialist case, this may appear to be inconsistent, but it is, in fact, both consistent and sound. The Socialist does not oppose Capitalism at all times and in all places. He does not hold that the capitalist system of producing and distributing wealth is "wrong" or that the Capitalists, individually, or in the mass, are "selfish" and "wicked," and are, therefore, to be condemned. We do not base our opposition to Capitalism or to slavery on the ground that it is "unjust" for one class to be employers and another class employees, or one class slave-owners and another class slaves. If we committed ourselves to the view that all class divisions are "wrong," that would be equivalent to saying that for thousands of years the human race has been straying from the correct path of development, and that the whole of human history since the breakdown of the earliest forms of tribal communism and equality has been a ghastly and avoidable mistake.

Our view is quite different from this. The driving force in the development of human society has been the development of the means of production and distribution of wealth. Knowledge has accumulated, and man's power over nature, his ability to produce tools and machinery has grown, and as this process has gone on, so it has been possible for human beings to enter into different relationships with each other for

the fullest utilisation of their growing power over natural forces. Thus, to take a simple illustration, from the time when a man could first produce a larger quantity of food and clothing than was necessary to keep him, it became possible for a military, or priestly, or a slave-owning class, to come into being, and for social relationships to take on a very different form. That development was not a "mistake" or a "crime," or an "act of tyranny." It was a differentiation of function, similar to any other division of labour. It was in keeping with the mode of production and the needs of society of that epoch.

In due course, as knowledge continued to grow, other changes became possible, and with more or less effort society has rid itself of slave-owners, military castes, feudal barons and other classes when the function they performed ceased to be necessary. In highly-developed Capitalist countries like Great Britain, the Capitalist class have ceased to play a part for which society has need. We propose to get rid of Capitalism because the means of production have developed to a point where Socialism—social ownership—is possible. We propose to dispense with the Capitalist class because we can now do without them. The production and distribution of wealth, including so-called "brain-work," and managerial work, are, in the main, already carried on by wage and salary earners, not by Capitalists. The Capitalist class have become more and more mere receivers of rent, interest and profit.

The position of Russia is quite different. Russian industry has not reached a high stage of development; the Russian workers



are only a tiny minority of the population; the great majority being backward peasant cultivators, whose interest it is to defend and promote private ownership of the land. Russia's industry has need of precisely those qualities and services supplied in this country by past generations of Capitalists. Russia has not passed through Capitalism, and must do so.

Many of the Russian Bolsheviks have seen all along that their task was to hasten as much as possible the development of Capitalism in Russia, but, unfortunately, their muddle-headed supporters in this country have spent the last ten years or so defending a non-existent Russian "Socialism." In fact, Russian industry is entirely Capitalistic. There is—as in Capitalist industry generally—a propertyless class of wage-earners on the one hand, and on the other a class of Capitalist investors in addition to the foreign Capitalists brought in to work "concessions." The progress that is being made in the development of Capitalism is indicated by the internal loan of 500 million roubles (£52,000,000) just issued by the Russian Government for the purpose of financing industry and agriculture. It represents about half of the total amount being devoted this year by the Government to economic development. In 1927, the amount raised by loan for this purpose was only 200 million roubles. Half the loan for 1928 bears 6 per cent. interest, plus lottery prizes, and half of it no interest, but with a premium on repayment (*Manchester Guardian*, July 27).

Thus we see the rapid rise in Russia of an investing class, not because the Bolsheviks prefer Capitalism to Socialism, but because they have no choice. Russia's immediate industrial development and her more distant progress towards Socialism lie along the path of Capitalism.

At the same time, the Russian Government are planning to spend £100,000,000 in the next three years on the creation of 100 huge State farms with the twofold object of growing grain for export and also of demonstrating the superiority of Capitalist agriculture to peasant proprietorship. It is anticipated that "good and secure wages" will attract the poorer peasants to seek employment in these State Capitalist concerns. (*Sunday Worker*, August 12.)

This development of Capitalism is gratifying, but only harm has come, and can come,

from the pretence of English Communists that Russian Capitalism is something else. The inevitable accompaniment of Russian Capitalism is the sharpening of the conflict between the contending classes, wage-workers, Capitalists, and peasant proprietors. The achievement of the Communists in Great Britain is to give the opponents of Socialism an excuse to use these class conflicts in Russia as evidence of the failure of Socialism; whereas, in truth, they are merely an unavoidable feature of Capitalism.

H.

#### RECEIVED FOR REVIEW.

U.S.S.R. and Disarmament. By W. P. Coates.  
Anglo-Russian Parliamentary Committee.  
1/-

#### ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A. Cullington (Hackney):

We use the quotations from "Forward" against the I.L.P. because it is no way contradictory to I.L.P. general policy. The fact that it is a privately-owned paper is no point, because all I.L.P. papers, including the "New Leader," are privately-owned.

We reject the quotations from Fred Henderson's book because it is in complete conflict with the object and programme of the I.L.P.—and that's that!

#### NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Correspondence intended for publication must be written on one side of the paper only, and name and address (not necessarily for publication) must accompany all communications.

In view of our limited space all communications should be as brief as possible.

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## THE SOCIALIST SEARCHLIGHT. VARIOUS POLICIES EXAMINED.

#### THE "SOCIALISM" OF THE LABOUR PARTY.

What the Labour Party calls Socialisation can easily be gathered from the famous speech on "Gradualism" made by the "brains" of the Labour Party—Mr. Sidney Webb—who plainly showed that his conception of Socialism was the ordinary legislation of Liberals and Tories. He said:

The process of Socialisation has been going on for a whole generation in National and Local Government without our realising it.

If the I.L.P. thinks that Mr. Webb is not advanced enough what about their own Tom Johnson, M.P., who as Editor of "Forward," continually describes Glasgow "City Owned" Tramcars as Socialism? This same I.L.P. leading Member of Parliament, in his debate with Mr. J. M. Keynes, said:

That he regarded many of the proposals in the Liberal Yellow Book as proposals for which Socialists could vote with both hands ("Forward," 11/8/28).

#### HOW COMMUNISTS FIGHT ELECTIONS.

Mr. Aitken Ferguson, adopted as Communist Party Candidate for North Aberdeen, shows that he is a Communist in name only. The National Left Wing Committee asked him if he accepted their programme and he replied (*Sunday Worker*, August 12):

The whole programme is unreservedly accepted. I am enclosing a copy of my election address, and you will notice that it differs in no essential points from the programme of your national committee.

This programme includes Nationalisation of Banks, Mines and Basic Industries, 44-hour week and £4 minimum wage Law, Nationalisation of Land (with due regard for Co-ops. and small holders!), Capital Levy, Unemployment Relief on a National Scale, Pensions at 55, Abolition of House of Lords.

This policy is not Communism nor is it one which alters the slave position of the workers under Capitalism. The programme can be carried out and still leave the Capitalists richer than ever, because nothing in such a series of reforms stops

the normal development of industry benefiting the Capitalist at the expense of the worker. The last item—abolition of House of Lords—shows how "vote catching" has reduced for election purposes the Communist demand of "smashing the State" to the gentle liberal political reform of "No Second Chamber."

#### RATIONALISATION AND ITS RESULTS.

"Apparently the increased seriousness of accidents during the last few years has been the direct result of the increased intensity of industrial activity during that period. There are, however, forces inherent in mechanisation itself and in the consequent speeding up of industry which have a direct tendency to increase the seriousness of accidents."

(From "A Study of Safety and Production," by The American Engineering Council.)

#### THE ECONOMIC MARCH.

"The fact that during the past 20 years the number of factories has increased by 40 per cent., while workshops have fallen by 26 per cent., is regarded as an indication that "the small employer tends to drop out of existence, and that mass production in highly organised establishments is steadily replacing the village and rural workshop."

The "Daily News," July 31st, quoting report of Chief Inspector of Factories, 1928.

#### THE COMMUNIST "UPSURGE."

Since the theses of the Third (Moscow) International advocating violence and armed insurrection (1921) were suppressed by the authorities, many workers think that policy has been abandoned by the Communists.

We print below two quotations from the new draft programme of the 3rd International now being discussed by the Congress in Moscow, where a large number of paid officials of Communist Parties are meeting.

These quotations prove that phrases and slogans borrowed from Russian experiences are still being advocated for countries with



a much different situation than Russia. The net result of such a programme is simply to get the minorities who act on these lines smashed by the powers of the governments. Steady organisation and education in Socialist ideas are neglected entirely by such schemes of sensational uprising.

#### THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME.

"When the revolutionary tide is flowing, when the dominant classes are disorganised, the masses are in a state of revolutionary ferment, the intermediary strata are inclining towards the proletariat and the masses are prepared for action and for sacrifice; the task of the party of the proletariat is to lead the masses into the direct attack upon the bourgeois state. This is to be achieved by propaganda in favour of all transitional slogans (Soviet's, workers' control of industry, the slogan of peasant committees for the seizure of the landlords' land, etc.), and the organisation of mass actions, to which all other branches of party work, agitation and propaganda, including parliamentary work, must be subordinated. This includes strikes, strikes combined with demonstrations, the combination of armed demonstrations and strikes, and finally the general strike conjointly with the armed uprising against the political power of the bourgeoisie. The struggle must be subjected to the rules of military art; it must be conducted according to a plan of war and in the form of a military offensive. It calls for the devoted loyalty and heroism of the proletariat. Such actions must be preceded by the organisation of the broad masses in military units which by their very form attract and set into action the maximum number of toilers (councils of workers' and peasants' deputies, soldiers' councils, etc.), and by intensified work in the army and navy." (Daily Worker, New York, July 16th, 1928).

#### THE MOSCOW POLICY FOR ENGLAND!

"Countries of highly developed capitalism (United States, Great Britain, Germany, etc.) with powerful productive forces, a high degree of centralisation of production, relatively small significance of small production and with a long-established bourgeois, democratic political system. In these countries, the fundamental political demand of the programme is direct transi-

tion to the dictatorship of the proletariat. In the sphere of economics the most characteristic are: The expropriation of the whole of large-scale production; the organisation of a large number of State Soviet farms, only a small share of the land to be transferred to the peasantry; unorganised market relationships to be permitted only on a small scale. Socialist development generally and the collectivisation of peasant farming in particular to proceed at a rapid rate."

(Daily Worker, New York, July 13th, 1928).

#### STREET FIGHTS ARE COMMUNIST POLICY.

Bucharin was the official Bolshevik speaker in favour of the new Draft Programme on July 19th at the Moscow Congress (1928). His remarks, which we quote below, ask the workers to resort to anarchist street fightings and state smashing and such hopeless and out-of-date methods of struggle. Modern conditions make all such policies obsolete in view of the development of the mighty political machine and its forces, as Engels well showed in reviewing the class struggles in France from 1848 to 1850.

Here is the quotation from Bucharin as printed in the official "International Press Correspondence" (July 30th, 1928).

Mass actions must be regarded as one of the best means in our struggle. Our tactics must be to mobilise the masses, to become masters of the streets, to attack again and again the law and order of the bourgeoisie State and to smash it, to capture the street by revolutionary means, in the strict sense of the word, and then to go further. Only on the basis of a whole series of such events and on the basis of the development of these events—mass actions, etc.—only through such a process can we prepare ourselves for fiercer and more stubborn mass struggles on a larger scale.

#### BACKWARD RUSSIA.

If they could show that any of the above methods had led to Socialism in Russia they might have a plausible argument. But as we have shown in these columns the Russian Bolshevik Policy is neither applicable here with a different stage of working class development, nor is it able to give Russia Socialism.

How backward Russia is we can regretfully read in this quotation from the Bolshevik Workers' Life of July 20th, 1928:

Russia is a country of small peasant farms, like those parts of Ireland, where landlords do not flourish. In general, the methods of tilling

used by the peasants are very primitive, and little attempt is made to sort out good seeds or to study the characteristics of the soil.

But scattered throughout the Soviet Union now there are a number of Soviet farms, larger in size than the peasant holdings, and very much more efficient.

In the R.S.F.S.R. there are over 3,000 such farms, and in the Ukraine there were 633 last year.

Large though these numbers seem, Soviet farms are only "a drop in the ocean" in the vast expanse of Russia. Their production is a very small proportion of Russia's total output. For instance, they have about 200,000 head of livestock on these farms (cattle, horses, sheep, pigs, etc.), but the total number of such animals in Russia is nearly 20,000,000!

A. KOHN.

#### SOCIALIST DEFINITIONS—A CRITIC CORRECTED.

Theydon Bois, Essex.

To the Editor, SOCIALIST STANDARD.

Many Socialists are probably hoping fervently that the stupid, bourgeois, definitions, which crept into the report of the Maxton v. Fitzgerald debate; definitions alleged to have been proffered by Mr. Fitzgerald, were misprints or lapsus linguae.

He is reported to have said:—

1. "By the working class is meant those who depend upon the sale of their services for their living."
2. "By the capitalist class is meant those persons who buy the services of the workers."
3. "Capital does not mean merely wealth used for the production of further wealth, but wealth invested for the purpose of obtaining a nett surplus, called interest."
4. "Wealth is the product of the application of human energies to nature given material."

These are the kind of "soppy" definitions which Marx hated and with which Maxton could easily agree because three of them were entirely wrong and the fourth was only half-true. Both 1 and 2 are quite suitable definitions to the Capitalist class simply because they hide the true nature of the labour-capital relations. "Services" are things done. The capitalists do not buy our services, they buy our power to do service—quite a different thing. This is no more pedantry or hair-splitting on my part than it was when Marx showed the difference between labour, the thing done, and labour-power, the ability to do things.

If capitalists buy service and we get paid fairly for those services we have nothing to grumble about; moreover the value of our services could only be assessed in terms of the actual things produced.

Service is work or labour done. The capitalist cannot make profit by buying labour done, and then by selling that labour, no! he makes his profit by buying labour power or power to do service, and, by consuming that power, in the production of commodities containing embodied service or labour which he sells more or less at value. The value of the embodied service, i.e., the amount of socially necessary labour, measured in hours, is much greater than the value of the labour-power consumed, or the power to do service. The difference constitutes surplus value, from which is derived rent, interest and profit.

Definition 3 is obviously absurd because interest is only one part of the net surplus. The other parts are rent and profit. 3 implies that to abolish interest is to abolish capital, since by the definition the net surplus is interest, and capital cannot exist without its function. In volume three of "Das Kapital," chapters 21, 22, 23 show that interest is that proportion of surplus value which an industrial capitalist pays to a money capitalist for the use of his money. The industrial capitalist borrows money, converts it into means of production and labour power, makes his surplus value and reproduces his original capital. This he converts back into money which he returns to the money lender, plus a proportion of his surplus value in the form of interest. What surplus is left is rent and profit. The rate of profit is determined by the inner laws of capitalist production, while "there is no such thing as a natural rate of interest in the sense in which the economists speak of a natural rate of profit, and a natural rate of wages" ("Das Kapital," vol. 3), because interest is only a part of profit.

Definition 4 is self-evidently only half-true. Sweat is the "product of the application of human energies to nature given material," but sweat is not wealth because it has no use. Similarly smoke from a factory chimney fulfils the conditions of definition 4, but it is waste, not wealth.

Thus the definitions should run:—

1. By the working class is meant those who depend upon the sale of their labour power for their living.



2. By the capitalist class is meant those persons who buy the labour power of the workers.

3. Capital does not mean merely wealth used for the production of further wealth, but wealth invested for the purpose of obtaining a surplus, called rent, interest and profit, according to the distribution of that surplus.

4. Wealth is the useful product of human activities applied to nature given material.

Just as when the I.L.P. misleads the working class by misusing words, he cannot "get away" with the plea that the workers are not pedants nor interested in the exact knowledge of terms, so the S.P.G.B. cannot defend the first set of definitions on similar grounds.

I, personally, cannot believe that so experienced a war-horse in the class-struggle as J. Fitzgerald is, could have stumbled at these definitions suggest, as badly as any callow I.L.P.er in the throes of debate.

I look forward to the publication of this letter, and a justification or renunciation of the exceedingly anti-Communist definitions imputed to J. Fitzgerald in the SOCIALIST STANDARD.

As for Maxton's phrase "narrowed to vanishing point" it was particularly unhappy in that it is a mathematical phrase which actually means "narrowed down to as small as we like though not out of existence." It is the essence of Gradualism, and in consequence quite anti-Socialist.

As I see it, your principles must force you to deny the definitions published in the June SOCIALIST STANDARD, on page 1.

Yours for Socialism,

J. WOLTZ.

### REPLY TO J. WOLTZ.

The condensed report of the Debate between Maxton and Fitzgerald was taken down during the debate for the purpose of appearing in the June SOCIALIST STANDARD, which was already in the printer's hands.

Under these circumstances it had to be rushed off to the printers that night and there was no time for the reporter to read the proofs before the paper appeared. This explains the appearance of one slip—not four—that Mr. Woltz has found.

To take Mr. Woltz's four points:—

(1) Mr. Woltz says "services" are things done." Indeed! By what reason-

ing does he reach this conclusion? The simple fact is that the word "service," like many other words, will have a meaning depending upon its context and tense. Mr. Maxton is exceedingly fond of referring to the "manual worker."

To meet this unscientific statement Fitzgerald pointed out its absurdity in the following words:—

There is a good deal of cant in describing workers as "mental" and "manual" workers. The definitions are quite unsound from a scientific point of view. No manual work can take place without a mental organisation. And no mental effort can be known until it has expressed itself through some physical channel. Therefore all those who depend for their existence upon the sale of their services are members of the working class.

Clearly the sale of one's services means the sale of the power to perform certain operations. This may be illustrated by the common phrase "offered their services"—that is their power to do certain things. The phrase as used was quite correct.

(2) The above answer disposes of Mr. Woltz's objection to the second definition.

(3) This is the one slip made by the reporter that Mr. Woltz has found. In the debate Fitzgerald read out a definition from a celebrated capitalist economist, and then gave the following paraphrase of Marx's statement:—

He (Marx) points out that the process is that the capitalist uses money to purchase commodities, including labour-power, and sells the finished product and, as a result, has money at the end. But there would be no sense in simply putting money into business to draw out the same amount at the end of the process. The formula therefore becomes—money—commodities and money plus an increment. And it is this increment that distinguishes capital. Capital therefore is wealth used for the purpose of obtaining this surplus which includes profit.

(4) Here Mr. Woltz has discovered a "mare's-nest." The report in the SOCIALIST STANDARD, even though condensed from the statement given in the debate, is still correct. If wealth is not the product of the application of human energy to Nature-given material, will Mr. Woltz explain what it is? His own definition merely adds a word—that begs the question and itself requires explanation—to our own statement.

In conclusion, we may point out that we are not concerned to give "communist" definitions, but "Socialist" ones, and this is what was done in the debate.

ED. COM.

## A LOOK ROUND.

### A BISHOP ON SLUMS.

We have often stated that the housing "problem" is insoluble within Capitalism. After the Lord Mayor's Show comes the Bishop of Ripon. Saith he:—

At the present rate of progress new generations will be born and will die in the existing slums. Before the present slums are abolished new insanitary areas will have come into being. (Nineteenth Century and after Magazine—June.)

Likewise the *Daily Chronicle*, August 8th, 1928:—

The centre point of the housing problem today is not that of building new houses, but of building houses in which the working-class can afford to live.

This, according to the Bishop, is equivalent to saying that at the present rate of Capitalist "progress," some of us will not be able to afford to live even in the slums. But the Bishop and the *Chronicle* reckon on the assumption that you will remain blind to your own interests for ever. See to it now. The price of our pamphlet "Socialism" is two pence, it gives the remedy for housing, and all the poverty problems of the working class.

### A REST CURE.

For Society jaded after the fatigues of the season, Goodwood is at once a rest cure and a tonic, for the fine air of the Downs is marvelously invigorating. ("Evening Standard," 30/7/28.)

Poor dears! how tiring! they need a change! Apparently others, too, have been jaded with the fatigues of "looking for work," for in the same paper we read that at Bethnal Green "2,000 unemployed besiege a workhouse." These contrasts obtrude everywhere. The *Daily News*, July 12th, 1928, tells us in heavy headlines of EIGHT MILLION PEOPLE ON POVERTY LINE—LUXURY TRADES BOOMING. This latter condition, is what is termed in our masters' press, "Our improving Trade," "National Prosperity," and so on. Any attempt to alter such arrangements is heralded as a threat on the life of the "Nation," "Public," or "Community." For all such terms issuing from Capitalist sources, read Capitalist or Parasite Class.

### A CAPITALIST ADMISSION.

The root cause of the present suspicions and antagonisms lies in the separation of those interested in industry into the two classes of capital-owning profit takers, and ownerless weekly wage earners."

This admission comes from a high-class Capitalist business publication (*Business Organisation*, June). At the same time it is interesting to compare one of the latest publications of the Labour Party. They tell us:—

The workers are not a class, they are the nation. Talk of the class war is obsolete. (Labour Encyclopædia, Vol. I, p. 117.)

The correct and scientific point of view we have given in every issue of the SOCIALIST STANDARD since we were an organisation. It will be found on the back page, paragraphs one and two, of our principles.

### LIBERAL INSANITY.

The Liberal Party possesses some wonderful minds. Think of the mental strain involved, and the disturbance of the grey matter, in putting this lot over:—

In the long run the cure for unemployment must be found in expanding opportunities for natural work. . . . (Sir John Simon, "Manchester Guardian," 30/7/28.)

This, mind you, in an age when, through privately-owned wealth, we must restrict its output and compel millions to cease production. The learned Liberal after years of office and opportunity, can propose nothing better than an aggravation of the causes, Capitalism remaining unchanged. Read the following carefully, and then reflect upon the ease with which we could produce wealth to-day if the needs of the producers, and not the Capitalist's profits, were the object of production:—

At the end of the 15th Century a peasant could provision his family for a twelvemonth by fifteen weeks of ordinary work. An artisan could achieve the same result in ten weeks. (Six centuries of work and wages, p. 389, Thorold Rogers). MAC.

### GET TOGETHER!

Readers of the "Socialist Standard" who desire to be put into communication with other readers in their district are invited to notify the General Secretary, at 17 Mount Pleasant, W.C.1.



**OFFICIAL NOTICE.**

All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 17, Mount Pleasant, London, W.C.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

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**The Socialist Standard,**

SEPT.



1928

**MAXTON & COOK:  
WHERE DO THEY STAND?**

Although several demonstrations have now been held, Messrs. Maxton and Cook have so far, neither by word nor deed, made clear what they stand for. They have said that they are Socialists. Yet Mr. Cook is secretary of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, and in that capacity supports their official policy of nationalisation, or State Capitalism, for the mining industry, with "compensation" for the mine-owners. That is not Socialism, and will not solve the problems of the miners. Mr. Maxton is Chairman of the I.L.P., which also advocates State Capitalism. They are both members of the Labour Party, although they condemn its "liberal" outlook. The Labour Party draft programme is a programme of Capitalist reforms, but Mr. Ramsay MacDonald states that Cook saw and approved the section dealing with the mines prior to publication, and the I.L.P. similarly had the whole draft for amendment. (*Forward*, July 21.)

The I.L.P., in a circular to its branches (July 21, 1928), published the four amendments to the Draft Programme, which it proposes to move at the Labour Party Congress. Not one of them touches the essential

point that the Labour Programme does not aim at common ownership of the means of production and distribution, and is therefore not a Socialist programme.

Has Mr. Maxton the backing of the I.L.P. members? If not, why does he retain the Chairmanship? If he has their backing for his policy, then he could control the actions of the I.L.P. Labour M.P.'s, and he is committed to all of the actions of the Parliamentary Labour Party, since a clear majority of the Labour M.P.s are members of the I.L.P. (It is interesting to observe that Mr. Philip Snowden, who ridicules the I.L.P., and declares that it is not Socialist, was re-elected, largely by the votes of I.L.P. Labour M.P.s, to the Executive Committee of the Parliamentary Labour Party.)

Mr. Maxton's ambiguous position on State Capitalism is paralleled by his position with regard to Capitalist international relationships.

In addition to being Chairman of the I.L.P., he is also Chairman of the League Against Imperialism. In the July issue of its organ, *The Anti-Imperialist Review*, appear reviews of books by H. N. Brailsford and J. C. Wedgwood, two prominent members of the I.L.P. Both books are condemned as being "frankly Imperialist." Mr. Maxton is not helping to clear away confusion of thought among the workers by remaining Chairman of two organisations, the members of which publicly denounce each other; nor is he helping Socialism by continuing to support I.L.P. and Labour Party programmes which he knows are not Socialist.

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**THE TRANSITION PERIOD.**

Mr. Fred Montague, M.P., replies to our Criticism.

48, Lucerne Road,  
Highbury Park, N.5.

August 10, 1928.

To the Editorial Board,

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD.

Dear Sirs,

As the next issue of *The Social Democrat* will be almost entirely a Conference number and it will be impossible for me to comment until later, perhaps you will be able to give me space for a few words upon your interesting statement.

(1) It is true that I hold a fundamentally different view, whether false or not. I do believe that Capitalism in its later stages represents a transition period. Slavery and Feudalism did in similar stages. I fail to see in what way this view conflicts with Marx.

The conception of society as an organism in process of modification does not seem to me to be unphilosophical or contrary to fact. To be Socialists, least of all to belong to the working-class, whether Socialist or not, is not to be outside existing society because Capitalism has not yet come to its natural demise. Workers *are* this society, and will not be able to make another until economic conditions are ready.

(2) How can it be said that the Capitalist class are in control of political machinery and the armed forces except by consent of the working-class? The workers have political power, and who but the workers compose the armed forces. Why use language reminiscent of "Bastille" psychology and characteristic of the slave complex? It is unreal rubbish.

(3) I agree that when there is a Socialist majority of an effective kind (remembering that bare majorities can have only bare power) the transition will assume a different character. Of course. But I reject the notion that (apart from possible revolutionary upheaval which, in itself, would be merely political, could not create Socialism by magic, and would probably come, if at all, prematurely) there is some inevitable break of continuity, because the workers vote one way instead of another.

(4) Your reply to Mr. Phillips (par. 3) seems to me to give the S.B.G.B. case away. If Capitalists, for the sake of avoiding "industrial and administrative chaos," will

refrain from blocking the way to Socialism whilst the transition period is taking place after the workers elect a Socialist majority to Parliament, why assume that everything done now to avoid industrial and administrative chaos must necessarily block the way?

(5) A period of transformation means a period, short or long, where one form of society exists in diminishing area side by side with another form in ascending area. A Socialist Government would have to admit the dual fact and legislate for economic stability. The fault of your analogy about Krupps and about war administration is that in those cases there was no change of Capitalist economic machinery or control. You will agree.

The only (though important) difference that crosses on ballot papers will make to economic evolution is that, for the first time the workers will take charge of the evolutionary process and direct existing collectivist tendencies into definitely Socialist channels. Well, we all want that. The difference between us is that you regard the advent of a Socialist Government as an entirely new economic departure, whilst I consider that the conscious awakening of the workers will be, like birth, a stage of existence, not origin *in vacuo*. I do not believe in special creation.

(6) In answer to Mr. Phillips you say the Capitalists are not prepared to pay any price. That is as true now as it will be when Parliament has a majority of Socialists. They are beginning not to pay the price of competition. They will not pay the price of social services that are not "profitable." They will let the nation "buy" industries that have ceased to "pay." All very accurate.

But if a national railroad service is necessary and Capitalists cannot and will not deliver the goods, what is there unsocialistic about nationalising the railways? Is it that national taxation will be burdened with interest on the bonds? Since when has it been "Socialistic" to hold that taxation matters to the workers? I am not interested in Nationalisation on the ground that it will "pay," but on the ground that, since "Rationalisation" is the only alternative I prefer to have economic machinery in the hands of the Parliament you and I want the workers to control.

Why should not Nationalisation benefit the workers under Capitalism? Unless you



hold that the "Iron Law" is a cast-iron law, and wages don't matter, whose is the fault if public servants of the working-class are not better paid and more secure? I know many cases in the municipal form of the principle where the workers *are* better off. On the other hand, if no workers can be better off they cannot be worse off, for a real iron law must be pretty rigid at both ends. In which case Nationalisation cannot injure the workers.

(7) Nationalisation, you say, will cause unemployment. More efficiency, less work. Three cheers for inefficiency! Is that Socialist policy? Good God, does the absence of Nationalisation in the coal industry "find work"? If keeping the workers employed in non-efficient Capitalist concerns instead of setting unemployed men to work to produce new wealth for their own consumption and new demand-power in the nation is Socialist, I have been at sea all my life. Can you say that workers could not insist upon the latter being done and might it not be done before your financial secretary or ours gets buried in the subscriptions of the working class? If not, why not?

One point more. I was not a recruiting agent. I did not ask other people to do even what I thought it proper to do myself.

Yours sincerely,  
F. MONTAGUE.

#### Our Reply.

(1) Mr. Montague says that "Capitalism" in its later stages represents a transition period," and he writes of Capitalism's "natural demise." This view conflicts both with fact and with the Marxian view of social development. Capitalism, administratively and socially, has always been adjusting itself to developments of new productive methods, and the rise of new sections of the Capitalist class, but this is not transition to Socialism. Capitalism, with ever new adjustments, will go on indefinitely unless and until the working-class decide to terminate it. Waiting for Capitalism to "come to its natural demise" and in the meantime assisting the Capitalists to reform Capitalism is not work for Socialists.

(2) Mr. Montague dismisses as "unreal rubbish" the notion "that the Capitalist class are in control . . . except by consent of the working-class."

This is interesting, but has nothing to do with our case.

Mr. Montague knows perfectly well that we have never denied that the workers consent to Capitalist control and vote for Capitalism at each election.

The point of importance (and this Mr. Montague conveniently ignores) is that the Capitalists *are* in control, and therefore the reforms they introduce are Capitalist remedies for Capitalist problems.

(3) The very definite break of continuity after the workers gain control for Socialism will be that, for the first time, an attack will be made on the private property basis of Capitalism.

Was there not a definite break of continuity in the Southern States of the U.S.A. when slavery was made illegal and replaced by wage-labour?

(4) We have not said that everything done by the Capitalist class "must necessarily block the way" to Socialism. What we have said is that while the Capitalist class are in control they will decide what shall and shall not be done. The pressure of their system, not the pleadings of "Labour" representatives, compels them to actions which sometimes work out to our benefit as well as theirs.

(5) It has already been pointed out that Socialism is international, and the conception of Socialism and Capitalism existing in "areas" "side by side," is quite foreign to Socialism.

If the change over from the production of munitions to the production of machinery can be carried out by the workers under Capitalism, we still fail to see why similar transformations should present special difficulty after the workers are in control. Mr. Montague fails to enlighten us.

We quite agree that the awakening of the workers is a gradual process, but their conquest of power is equally obviously a definite new departure.

(6) We asked Mr. Montague to defend his support of Nationalisation, which he agreed is "only another form of Capitalism." Our opposition was stated to be on the ground that "it will not benefit the workers under Capitalism." Instead of showing that the workers would be better off under Nationalisation, Mr. Montague first says that he prefers to have "economic machinery in the hands of the Parliament you and I want the workers to control"—but the point is that the workers at present do not control Parliament, and the proposition Mr. Montague has

to defend is the advocacy of State-ownership by a Parliament in control of Capitalist parties.

He then uses the flimsy argument that he knows some municipal employees who are "better off." As he gives no particulars, nor any explanation of his basis of comparison, no answer is possible. I would, however, refer him to the explicit statement of the Civil Service Industrial Court which last year arbitrated on Post Office wages, that it accepted the principle of basing wage rates on those paid in outside industry.

Lastly, does Mr. Montague really think that we ought to support any reform the Capitalists choose to advocate, provided it is not positively harmful to the workers? If Nationalisation leaves the workers no better and no worse off than now, that is a sufficient reason not to waste efforts on it; efforts which might be devoted to the achievement of Socialism.

(7) Mr. Montague asks if "inefficiency" is Socialist policy. It is not. Have we ever said it was?

What he persistently fails to recognise is that the economic evils of the working-class are due to their wage-slave position in Capitalist society. Mr. Montague misleads the workers by persuading them to believe that Nationalisation will solve their problems. Our alternative to advocating either private or State Capitalism is to advocate Socialism. Mr. Montague's alternative to advocating private Capitalism is advocating State Capitalism, coupled with such nonsense as "setting unemployed men to work to produce new wealth for their own consumption," as if such a thing were possible with the Capitalist class still in control of the means of production. H.

#### KNOWLEDGE.

The following Books can be obtained from Head Office:—  
**Anarchism and Socialism.** Plechanoff. 3/6, paper 1/2.  
**Civil War in France.** Marx 2/9.  
**Conditions of the Working Class in England in 1844.** Engels. 5/-  
**Critique of Political Economy.** Marx. 6/6.  
**18th Brumaire of Louis Napoleon.** Marx. 3/6.  
**Evolution of Property.** Lafargue. 3/6, limp 1/6.  
**Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State.** Engels. 3/6.  
**Poverty of Philosophy.** Marx. 6/6.  
**Revolution and Counter-Revolution.** Marx. 3/6, limp 1/6.  
**Social and Philosophical Studies.** Lafargue 3/6.  
**Socialism: Utopian and Scientific.** Engels. 3/6, limp 1/6. Postage extra.

#### SHOULD SOCIALISTS VOTE FOR LABOUR CANDIDATES.

At its formation the Communist Party of Great Britain decided by a small majority to seek entrance to the Labour Party. But while willing to sacrifice their independence, they nevertheless denounced the leaders of that Party and ran candidates against MacDonald at Woolwich, and Morgan Jones at Caerphilly. Later they were ordered by those who pay the piper and call the tune to advocate the policy of the "united front." They expressly pointed out that this did not mean unconditional support of the Labour Party, but only a willingness to co-operate in any action against the employing class. At the 1922 Congress of the Communist International, the following statement was issued:—

The tactics of the United Front should by no means imply the forming of electoral combinations of leaders for the pursuit of certain parliamentary aims. The tactics of the United Front is the call for the united struggle of Communists and of all other workers, either belonging to other parties and groups, or belonging to no party whatever, for the defence of the elementary and vital interests of the working-class against the bourgeoisie. (Fourth Congress Thesis on Tactics, page 10).

In actual practice, although the Communists have all along strenuously denied that the Labour Party has been engaged in "the defence of the elementary and vital interests of the working-class," they have given them full and unconditional support at election times.

Now Moscow has ordered another volte face, and the Communists are busy trying to prove that the United Front never existed, or alternatively, that it is not inconsistent with opposing Labour candidates.

At the Linlithgow bye-election they first put up a Communist candidate against the Labour candidate (E. Shinwell) and then withdrew him on the plea of shortness of time and told the workers not to vote at all. Their manifesto says:—"We, therefore urge the workers not to waste time and energy in voting for any candidate in the present election."—(*Sunday Worker*, 25th March.)

A few weeks later, at the Hanley bye-election, the Communist, J. R. Campbell, was speaking in the constituency, billed as the "man who brought down the Labour Government." After denouncing the Labour candidate at Hanley, Campbell told



them to vote for him!—(*Daily Telegraph*, 19th April, 1928.)

In the *Labour Monthly* (April, 1928) the Communist Editor, R. Palme Dutt, tries to explain away this confusion, and actually has the temerity to quote with approval the views of Marx on the need to run independent working-class candidates. At Aberdeen the Communists did indeed run their own candidate—but on a programme of reforms!

With the views expressed by Marx on this subject in the Address to the Communist League (1850) we heartily agree. They are in line with our own attitude and directly opposed to that of the Communist party in the past seven years.

Beside the bourgeois democratic candidates there shall be put up everywhere working-class candidates, who, as far as possible, shall be members of the League, and for whose success all must work with every possible means. Even in constituencies where there is no prospect of our candidate being elected, the workers must nevertheless put up candidates in order to maintain their independence, to steel their forces, and to bring their revolutionary attitude and party views before the public. They must not allow themselves to be diverted from this work by the stock argument that to split the vote of the democrats means assisting the reactionary parties. All such talk is but calculated to cheat the proletariat. The advance which the Proletarian Party will make through its independent political attitude is infinitely more important than the disadvantage of having a few more reactionaries in the national representation!!

Now contrast with Marx's definite and clear-cut attitude the muddled Communist record. At the 1923 election quite a number of Communists were running as official Labour Candidates. Mr. W. Paul went to the poll with his election address graced by a message to the electors from Ramsay MacDonald. The Communists worked and voted for J. H. Thomas and Clynes, and the rest of the Labour defenders of Capitalism and boasted of it. In particular compare Marx's advice to ignore the "stock argument" about splitting the democratic vote, with the following words written by Mr. Harry Pollitt after the 1923 election. He said that the Communists, if they had used the information in their possession, could have prevented the election of Mr. Frank Hodges. Instead they supported him. "We did not expose Mr. Hodges during the Election because we did not desire to split the workers' vote."—(*Workers' Weekly*, December 21st, 1923.)

As against this tortuous and ineffective Communist policy we commend to Palme Dutt and his fellow Communists the passage he quotes from Marx.

### MUST THE WORKERS CONTROL PARLIAMENT?

In the July issue of the *Commune*, Mr. Guy Aldred devotes some space to a criticism of the Socialist policy of gaining control of Parliament. He takes a number of passages from the report on the debate with Mr. Maxton (published in the June "S.S.") and appends his comments. He quotes correctly enough the statement that the "armed forces are provided for annually by Parliament," and then devotes a paragraph to "proving" that "Parliament does not provide the armed forces by annual voting." By the substitution of the word "provide" in place of "provide for," he is able to disprove something which we did not say. It is true that Parliament does not vote each year an Act to sanction the existence of an armed force. What it does have to do each year is to pass the Army (Annual) Act without which the maintenance of discipline would become impossible, and it has to vote each year the monies needed for the upkeep of those armed forces. If Parliament did not pass the Army Act and vote supplies, the armed forces would cease to exist.

He admits the correctness of the statement that "those who control Parliament control the armed forces," but adds the comment that the Capitalists "are the controllers of Parliament because they are the owners of surplus-value." This is simply not true. Capitalist candidates are placed in control of Parliament (as Mr. Aldred admits) by working-class votes, and the Capitalist class do not exercise, and have no means of exercising compulsion on the workers to make them vote for Capitalism. Unfortunately, the workers vote for Capitalist candidates from choice.

Mr. Aldred's statement that "every person who is elected to Parliament and participates in its work is an agent of Capitalism" requires some explanation.

What does he mean by "participates in its work"? Socialist candidates will be elected to Parliament to use it for the purpose of instituting Socialism.

Mr. Aldred denies that it is necessary for the workers to obtain control of the political

machinery in order to establish Socialism, but beyond an unsupported assertion that it is contrary to the "common sense of the working-class experience" and to the materialist conception of history, he avoids giving any reason why control of the political machinery will not serve the purpose of a Socialist Party. As the working-class have never attempted to use Parliament for the purpose of establishing Socialism, it would be interesting to know of what experience Mr. Aldred is thinking.

After roundly condemning the Socialist Party (among other things, Mr. Aldred makes the lying statement that we advocate "the Nationalisation" of the I.L.P., under which the wage-labourer remains a wage-labourer") he goes on to offer to support our candidates at election provided they pledge themselves "to challenge the oath of allegiance." So Mr. Aldred can swallow the "Nationalisation of the I.L.P.," provided the pill is sugared with a meaningless pledge to challenge the oath of allegiance. Mr. Aldred's place would appear to be in the I.L.P.

### WHAT IS CAPITAL?

To the Editor, SOCIALIST STANDARD.

In your reply to Mr. Keeble's letter concerning the aims of the I.L.P. you repeat for about the umpteenth time that the statement that land and capital should be communally owned is utterly meaningless.

I have followed very closely the controversies between various political parties, but never have I heard of one party accusing the other of putting forward as its chief doctrine a meaningless statement. Surely you do not really believe that such is the case with the I.L.P.? According to your definition of capital, i.e., as money invested with the object of profit-making, it would be quite obvious to anybody that all talk about common ownership of capital would be meaningless, since under Socialism capital in that sense of the word would be non-existent.

Reverting however to what some people choose to call "bourgeois" economics (which is the economics that the I.L.P. seem to follow) we find that capital is defined as "wealth set aside for the production of further wealth." This translated into everyday speech simply amounts to the means of producing wealth (i.e., machinery, factories, etc.). The I.L.P. are therefore in agreement with you that the means of production of wealth should be communally owned. I sincerely trust, therefore, that (even if you do not print this letter) you will in future refrain from levelling such a ridiculous accusation at the I.L.P.

Incidentally, I might point out to you that your action only serves to confuse the minds of your readers.—Yours sincerely,

"INDEPENDENT."

### Our Reply.

"Independent" believes that when the I.L.P. use as a description of their aim the phrase "communal ownership of capital" (admitted by their Chairman, Mr. Maxton, to be an absurd contradiction in terms) what they really mean is common ownership of the means of wealth production and distribution. That this is not so has been shown in these columns by numerous quotations from I.L.P. publications in which they admit their intention to be Nationalisation, with the present owners still drawing property incomes, but from the ownership of Government bonds instead of company shares.

Their aim is not common ownership, but merely State Capitalism.

For example, *The Socialist Programme* (I.L.P., 1924, p. 24) says:—

The present shareholders in mines and railways could receive State mines or railway stock based on a valuation and bearing a fixed rate of interest.

It is amusing to be told that we are guilty of confusing the minds of our readers by using the only tenable definition of "capital." An economic theory is either correct or incorrect. To talk of "bourgeois" economics as distinct from some other kind, as if two incompatible doctrines can both be correct, is nonsense.

(Incidentally, at least two anti-Socialist economists of note have explicitly rejected this unsound definition of Capital, viz., Professor Edwin Cannan, and the late Sir William Ashley.)

If "wealth set aside for the production of further wealth" is "capital" (as is taught by the I.L.P.) then Capitalism would be any society in which tools or machinery are used. Thus "feudalism" would be "Capitalism," and, in fact, every system of human society, and some animal societies, would all be correctly described as "Capitalism." Socialism itself would on this showing also be "Capitalism." The theory is unsound, but exceedingly convenient to opponents of Socialism who wish to prove that Capitalism has always been and always will be. By spreading this confusion, the I.L.P. is doing the work of the anti-Socialist.

H.

YOUR newsagent can obtain the "Socialist Standard" through the wholesalers, W. H. Smith & Son. Ask him to get your copy, but if you have any difficulty send direct to 17, Mount Pleasant, London, W.C.1.



## THE PLAIN CASE FOR SOCIALISM.

### THE WORKERS CONDITIONS TO-DAY.

"Eight Million People on Poverty Line"—so runs the headline of a column in the *Daily News* for July 12th. An unemployed army that is steadily growing and is now nearly a million and a half; a coal-mining industry that is declining and turning its workers out to starve; a railway industry that is alleged to be on the down grade and has drawn from the Rt. Hon. J. H. Thomas the remark:

"The railway situation to-day is worse than ever it was before, and I am gravely apprehensive about it." (*Daily News*, 2/7/28.)

Which remarks he backed up by recommending the railway workers to accept a 2½ per cent. reduction off their wages.

Ten thousand harvesters required for Canada (sixteen hours a day of real hard work) and tens of thousands apply for the jobs—some walking hundreds of miles, some getting out of sick beds, old men weakly pretending they are young, weaklings laying claim to lustihood, and all just for the chance of bread and butter.

But, we are told, we can't do without capital, and evils such as these are necessary in order that society shall continue to "progress."

### THE EMPLOYERS' "SOLUTION."

How the capitalist looks at the situation is suggested by the remarks of Mr. William Wallace, at the Conference of Quaker Employers last April, where he said:

Capital should have a minimum wage, and in addition, a premium for the risk run. The worker should have a statutory minimum wage and the management a sufficient remuneration to secure the kind of management required. The surplus should then be used, firstly, to raise the minimum wage to the human needs basis, and, after that, it might be desirable to go on to profit-sharing or other means of distribution, such as pensions, superannuation, etc. (Italics ours)—*Daily News*, 14/4/28.

It will be seen that in the eyes of the Quaker the first essential is an adequate return for capital. He is willing to allow, as a secondary question, a minimum wage to the workers—but less than required to meet human needs. If, however, there is any surplus he is agreeable that a portion

of it shall be used to raise the minimum wage to meet human needs!

If we take the above as a representative example of the Capitalist outlook (and remember the Quaker has a name as a "good" employer!) then all the bulk of the workers can hope for when in work is a wage less than what will meet human needs. As employment is a fluctuating quantity and the machine steadily encroaches upon the available jobs, each worker risks increasing periods of unemployment. How is he to get over these periods with no chance of savings to fall back upon? The answer, of course, is semi-starvation on the dole—for those that can qualify!

### WHAT CAPITALISM HAS DONE FOR YOU.

In the days when human society was young no such troubles beset the people—starvation through unemployment was not known. It is a product of Capitalism and Capitalism cannot cure the disease without risking its continued existence. There is really only one cure and that cure involves the extinction of capitalism as such, for it strikes at the root of both unemployment and capitalism—the private ownership of the means of production.

The solution to the unemployment problem is so simple that once grasped it seems extraordinary that one has not seen it before. At the outset one may ask, "How can people be workless when the earth abounds in fruitfulness and there are hungry mouths to fill?" Surely the situation is ridiculous and forces one to see that there must be something fundamentally wrong with the method of production and distribution that is now in use. No amount of deep economic argument or highflown philosophical phrases can get over or explain away facts so simple as this.

If the bulk of a nation must endure poverty and know little of the pleasures of life in order that "Science, progress and Capitalism" shall flourish, then surely the sufferers must, sometime, put the question, "Why not shatter the whole thing to bits and relapse into barbarism" where conditions of this kind were unknown. The essence of the argument in favour of carry-

ing on as at present simply signifies the providing of leisure, enjoyment, "progress" and the rest for a privileged few at the expense of the many.

### WHAT IS THE PRESENT SYSTEM?

Fortunately, however, there is no need either to shatter society to bits, or to relapse into barbarism, in order to remove the evils that exist.

The hungry man looks into the baker's shop but durst not take his fill.—Why? Because somebody else owns the goods. The unemployed man looks wistfully through the window at the whirring machinery, but durst not take his place at a machine.—Why? Because somebody else owns the factory and all that is in it. This brings us down at once to the root of the problem.

Taking the whole of society broadly, in almost every country the situation is as follows: The great bulk of the wealth in existence is produced by working people receiving wages in return for the energies they expend. This wealth and the workshops, raw material, and land involved in its production, are owned by vast companies representing mainly a relatively small group of shareholders who do not obtain their living by working, but live on the dividends they get from the companies. These companies naturally aim at providing as much dividends as possible and to this end only keep their factories running as fully and as long as profit (in the long run, of course) comes to them. They, therefore, take advantage of the aid of science in the way of providing machinery and organisation that reduces the staff that need be employed for producing a given quantity of goods. The net result is a steady decrease in the relative number of work people employed and consequent increase of unemployment.

### ECONOMIC EVOLUTION.

Hundreds of years ago slavery came into existence because man's power to produce reached a point where one man was able to produce in a day of labour a quantity of goods (or services) greater in value than what was needed to keep him for the day—he produced more than his keep. At that time this robbery was plain for every eye to see because the oppression was direct and open. In later times, for instance in Rome at the time of its imperial greatness, it was

plain that the vast mass of slaves produced, not only all that kept them, but also a huge extra quantity that enabled the Patrician slave-holders to live luxuriously and distribute gratuitous feasts for the angry but poor freemen when they became restive. Since those days the means to produce a given quantity of goods with a less and less expenditure of human energy have made mighty strides, until we have reached a time when millions can be kept well nourished for employment in the work of destroying wealth, in a quantity and at a rapidity that is astounding—as in the war that finished ten years ago. Just pause for a moment and ponder over the fact that every single shell that burst over any front represented in value hundreds of square meals. Multiply the number that burst by the value of the guns, the equipping of the armies, and the value of the fortifications, buildings and the like destroyed and you will get some vague idea what present society, with its crippling methods of wasteful production, can afford to waste in the matter of wealth and still live. During the last month armies of soldiers, fleets of warships, and armies of aeroplanes have been engaged in costly manœuvres—all waste of wealth and human energy. Ponder a little more and you will realise how easy it would be to fill every empty stomach, clothe every ragged body and house every starveling, if all the energy employed wastefully were spent on work connected with the production of what is necessary to meet the needs of all. Socialism implies this.

GILMAC.

(To be continued).

### S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS

LONDON DISTRICT.	
<b>Sundays</b> ...	Clapham Common, 3 p.m. Tottenham, West Green Corner, 11.30 a.m. Tooting, Ganett Lane, Tooting Broadway, 7.30 p.m. Victoria Park, 4 p.m. Woolwich, Beresford Square, 7.30 p.m. Hyde Park, 11.30 p.m. Paddington, Prince of Wales, 8 p.m.
<b>Mondays</b> ...	Paddington, Prince of Wales, 8 p.m. Clerkenwell, Garnault Place, 8 p.m. Camberwell, Wren Road, 8 p.m.
<b>Wednesdays</b> ...	Hackney, Paragon Road and Mare Street, 8 p.m. Paddington, Prince of Wales, 8 p.m.
<b>Thursdays</b> ...	Becontree, Rodney Street, Ilford, 8 p.m.
<b>Fridays</b> ...	Clerkenwell, Acton St., Grays Inn Rd., 8 p.m.
<b>Saturdays</b> ...	West Ham, Water Lane, 8 p.m. Wood Green, Jolly Butchers Hill, 8 p.m. Leyton, Corner Grange Park, 7.30 p.m.
HANLEY BRANCH.	
<b>Sundays</b> ...	Hanley Market Square, 7 p.m. Burslem, St. John Square, 7 p.m.



## BRANCH DIRECTORY.

- BATTERSEA.**—Sec., 2, Hanbury-road, S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns-road. Discussion second Thurs. in month.
- BECONTREE.**—Sec., Hy. Gratton, 4, Drummond Ave., Brooklands, Romford. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 7.30, at above address.
- BETHNAL GREEN.**—Communications to D. Jacobs, 28, Lyal Road, Bow, E.3.
- BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec. E. Jesper, 36, Rollason-rd., Erdington. Branch meets The Continental Café, Moor St., 1st and 3rd Sundays at 11 a.m.
- CAMBERWELL.**—Sec., J. Goodfellow, 40, Solon New Road, Clapham, S.W.4. Branch meets at Camberwell Trades Council Room, 6A, Artichoke Place, Camberwell Green, every Friday at 8.30 p.m. Discussions—public invited.
- CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.
- CLERKENWELL.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at 17, Mount Pleasant, W.C.1. Discussions first Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.—all invited. Sec., at above address.
- EAST LONDON.**—Sec., A. Jacobs, 78 Eric-st., Mile-end, E.3. Branch meets first and third Mondays in month at above address.
- HACKNEY.**—Branch meets The Old Gravel Pit Hall, Mare-street, Hackney, Mondays, 8 p.m., Discussions 9.30. Communication to Sec. as above.
- HANLEY.**—Branch meets Tuesdays, Working Men's Club, Glass-st. Sec., F. Goldstraw, 38, Paddock Street, Hanley.
- ISLINGTON.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 144, Seven Sister-rd., Holloway, N. Sec., M. Baker, 18, Orpingley-rd., N.7.
- LEYTON.**—Sec., A. Holland, 396, Lea Bridge-rd., Leyton. Branch meets 8 p.m., Trades and Labour Hall, Grove House, High-rd., every Monday. Public invited.
- MANCHESTER.**—Sec., W. Addison, 111, West Park-street, Salford, Manchester.—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month, 7.45 p.m., at 114, Duke St., Stretford-road.
- PADDINGTON.**—Branch meeting held on 2nd and 4th Fridays, 8 p.m., in room above the Co-operative Stores, 306, Kilburn-lane, W.9 (side door).
- SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Sec., J. Bird, 5 Wellington-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.
- TOOTING.**—Sec., 15, University-road, Collier's Wood, S.W. 19. Branch meets every Friday at 8 p.m. at Tooting Adult School, 971, Garratt-lane, S.W. 17.
- TOTTENHAM.**—Secretary, 18, Woodlands Park Rd., N.15. Branch meets Fridays, Room 2, Trades Hall, 7, Bruce Grove. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.
- WALTHAMSTOW.**—Sec., S. E. Williams, 3, Dyson-rd., Leytonstone, E.11. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.
- WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107 Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at Secretary's address.

**WEST HAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford rd., Stratford. Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

**WOOD GREEN.**—All communications to Sec., F. W. Godfrey, 71, Falkland Road, N.8.

**WOOLWICH.**—Branch meets at 94, Griffin Road, Plumstead. Communications to Secretary at above address.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interests of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great HOLDS— Britain

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



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[MONTHLY, TWOPENON.

## WHAT IS THE STATE?

"We are the State!" exclaimed an enthusiastic young supporter of the Labour Candidate at a recent by-election. Presumably he included in the "we," the working class, to which he obviously belonged; and as the notion to which he gave utterance lies at the root of much that is mis-called "Socialism," it demands some consideration.

The State is the political organisation of society under the control of one class for the ruling of other classes. It arose and developed along with the division of society into classes and the struggle between those classes of which written history is the record.

Lewis Henry Morgan, in "Ancient Society," showed how the State took its departure from the old *kinship* form of society as a result of the development of private property and chattel slavery. Up till that time the military force of the social group had been directed *outward* against hostile groups also based upon kinship, or common descent.

The essential feature of the State, however, is that its forces are directed not only against hostile States but *inwards*, against a subject class.

Thus the ancient city-states of Greece, Rome, etc., existed to procure and subjugate a slave-population for the economic benefit of the patricians and rich plebians who were slave-owners. The kingdoms of the Middle Ages preserved the social supremacy of the feudal lords over the serfs, etc., while the modern State, no matter whether it be nominally monarchical or republican, exists to protect the accumu-

lated wealth of the capitalist class against the wage-slaves who produce it.

Here, however, the bourgeois "democrat" (whether Conservative, Liberal or Labour) protests that these wage-slaves, as we call them, have the vote.

"They elect their own rulers; therefore, in effect, they govern themselves."

It is necessary here to keep our eyes on history. The wage-earning section of the population have only been enfranchised for the last half-century, and up to the present have not developed the political knowledge and organisation necessary for the control of the State power in their own interests. They have, on the contrary, placed this power repeatedly in the hands of their class enemies by voting for parties which uphold the legal rights of those enemies. Hence we find that even under so-called "Labour" Governments the armed forces are held in readiness to repress any attempt by dissatisfied sections of the workers to challenge those property rights.

These facts lead superficial folk to the conclusion that the workers cannot acquire political control; that there is some obstacle inherent in the very nature of the political machinery which prevents the wage-slaves doing what all previous insurgent classes have done. We are frequently told, for instance, that the vote is "only a piece of paper" and has no real power. We have only to push this sort of "logic" a little further to see its utter absurdity.

A £5 note is "only a piece of paper," but even an anarchist would not throw one away. The so-called "economic power" of the property-owning class is also repre-



sented by pieces of paper, i.e., title deeds, bonds, share certificates, I.O.U.s, bank books, receipts, bills of exchange, agreements, etc., legal documents, in fact, of every description. The validity of these pieces of paper is recognised and upheld by the State, which at present is but the executive of the entire capitalist class, the specially appointed guardian of its collective interests.

The enfranchisement of the workers was the outcome of industrial development. So long as they were scattered in small towns and villages under handicraft and early manufacturing conditions it was easy enough for the property-owning class to rule by virtue of their own organisation; but the advance of machinery brought the wage-slaves together in masses of formidable size, animated, moreover, by an increasing discontent with the existing social order. The political expression of this discontent, the Chartist movement, was for the time being crushed; but it opened the eyes of the ruling class to the danger of ignoring the force behind it. How to utilise this force and divert it into channels consistent with the safety of capitalist society became the most pressing problem for this class. It was solved by degrees through the partial granting of the Chartists' demands.

Henceforward the various sections of the master-class—Conservative, Liberal and Radical—made bids for working-class support, professing sympathy with their aspirations towards improved conditions, promising measures of reform and thus effectively dividing the workers into corresponding factions which cancelled one another out and nullified any attempt at independent organisation.

The enfranchisement of the workers has thus served as a safety-valve in delaying the inevitable social explosion and has more recently enabled the masters to utilise on a wide scale the knowledge and experience of members of the working class itself in leading that class up political blind alleys and in gaining its support for the more efficient and economical working of the machinery of government.

Is it therefore useless to the workers? By no means! Any machine, tool or instrument may be used for a variety of purposes or to no purpose at all in accordance with the knowledge of the operator.

The same railway engine which draws hundreds of passengers to their desired destination may stretch them lifeless on the track. A razor may be used for getting a shave or cutting one's throat, while spades may be used indifferently either for digging potatoes or burying the dead. Socialists regard the State as an instrument of oppression so long as it is controlled by the political organisations which support capitalism, no matter what facile yarn these organisations may use to ensnare the workers. The same economic development, however, which has raised the master-class to wealth has also converted the majority of society into wage-slaves. This majority can assume the ascendancy in the State so soon as it understands its revolutionary mission as dictated by its interests. The franchise is not a mere bribe to be offered or withdrawn by some imaginary free-will of the master-class. It has been wrung from them by the necessity of having working-class support just as wages are wrung from them by the necessity of feeding and clothing their slaves.

"But," it is objected, "the masters do not rely exclusively upon the workers' support. They finance the armed forces and can thus defy a Socialist majority." The people who raise this objection talk as though financing the armed forces was quite a simple matter. They ignore wholesale the complex conditions under which that financing is carried on.

Charles I. in this country and Louis XVI. in France came to untimely ends through making similar mistakes and imagining that it could be done quite easily without the assistance of Parliament.

The capitalist class in both countries went to a considerable amount of trouble in gaining and developing parliamentary control of the Army, simply because painful experience convinced them that this control could not be entrusted to irresponsible individuals without danger to the interests of the tax-paying class itself.

Financiers do not lend money either to governments, military adventurers, or any other concerns just for the fun of the thing; or from patriotic motives, a relish for excitement or sheer philanthropy. Hence one finds at the top of most financial columns in the newspapers quotations of numerous gilt-edged securities such as Consols, 2½ per cent. and 4 per cent.; War Loan,

5 per cent.; Victory Bonds, 4 per cent. On these securities interest has to be paid, and as the gigantic investments in the machine for the maintenance of capitalism are secured upon the entire property of the capitalist class, its taxable capacity has to provide the interest.

Parliament, among other things, regulates taxation according to the varying interests of the exploiting class. Its seizure by a class-conscious majority of workers or its voluntary abandonment by its capitalist upholders spells death for capitalism.

Finance is a power only so long as there is no greater power to take its place. So long as the workers accept the wages system they will of necessity allow those who hold the money-bags to hold also the reins of government. Only an organisation of the workers based on the recognition of the need for common ownership and democratic control of the means of life will be able to dispense with money and consequently snap their fingers at those who hug it like some weird talisman whose charm is broken.

In the proletariat's hour of triumph the financiers will endeavour in vain to feed and clothe their erstwhile defenders with coins and pieces of paper. The producers of wealth will consciously assume control of its distribution.

Their fellows in the armed forces will have no conceivable incentive to attempt to say them nay.

The Labourites who claim now that "we are the State" have to explain how it is that the State enslaves us and withholds from us the means of producing and distributing wealth. On the other hand, the so-called Communists, Anarchists, industrialists and the like who claim that we have not the means to obtain control of the State machinery, have to explain how we can be prevented from doing so, or, alternatively, what other way there is of achieving our emancipation.

E. B.

## GET TOGETHER!

Readers of the "Socialist Standard" who desire to be put into communication with other readers in their district are invited to notify the General Secretary, at 17 Mount Pleasant, W.C.1.

## HAVE SOCIALISTS A CONSTRUCTIVE POLICY?

Socialists are accustomed to have the charge levelled at them that their criticism of present-day society is purely destructive. "What is your constructive programme?" we are plaintively asked when our opponents have tired of carrying on the hopeless defence of their own.

We might answer them very fittingly by the single word, Socialism, and refer them to our definition of the term, which heads our declaration of principles; but this seldom satisfies their insatiable curiosity. They want more details. Strange to say, it rarely occurs to them to press for details when dealing with the champions of the various parties which secure their support.

A few rhetorical flourishes and numerous judicious appeals to sentiments associated with "this glorious Empire," or "the people of this country," as the case may be, are quite sufficient to "bring the house down" at the average Tory, Liberal or "Labour" meeting. It is only the Socialist, apparently, who produces among his audience that state of discomfort which usually accompanies the process of thought; and he frequently piles on the agony by asserting that, apart from Socialism, no programme is worth the support of the working class.

At this point the patience of many workers breaks down altogether and it matters little whether they call themselves Conservatives or Communists, they cannot refrain from contrasting their own "practical" outlook, as they term it, with the "theoretical" vision of the Socialist.

The Socialist, however, does not rely upon his imagination for the evidence against the existing social order. Never in the world's history has any system been so effectively damned by the public utterances of its supporters as has capitalism.

Take, for instance, the following extract from the speech of Mr. Percy Lee, Master Cutler of Sheffield, on the occasion of the opening of the recent Exhibition:—

You all know that during that period (the War), we became, I suppose, the greatest arsenal in the world. . . . This meant a large increase in our various plants and . . . it has left us in a much more efficient state so far as manufacture is concerned than we were before. Our only difficulty is to make full use of this increase in plant and obtain fuller employment for the number of men who still remain with us.



I may say we are at the present time turning out more goods from Sheffield than we ever did before the war . . . during which we lost many of our overseas markets and at the same time we have found since many new competitors who were forced to manufacture for themselves ("Sheffield Telegraph," 7/7/28).

Here we have it definitely admitted that the world's capacity for production of iron and steel has increased enormously; yet, instead of the producers reaping any benefit thereby, something approaching thirty thousand men are walking the streets of Sheffield looking for a job.

The workers pile up wealth in heaps and then stand and starve while it rots. What do our practical and brainy masters suggest as a solution? Simply that things should remain the same, only more so.

For nearly a generation the Conservative Press has toyed with the notion of Protection under various guises, but has never yet offered any explanation for the mammoth totals of unemployment periodically reported from the U.S.A. The Progressive parties, from the laburnum-hued Liberals to the crimson Communists, pin their faith to some degree of publicly-enforced efficiency; but in whichever direction we turn for evidence that their plans solve their problems it fails to materialise. In Germany, in Australia, in Russia (despite Liberal, Labour or Communist administrations) the workers are faced with an exactly similar situation so far as wealth production is concerned.

Let the extreme case serve as an example. "In spite of the rapid growth of industry, unemployment has steadily grown," says the Central Council of Trades Unions in Soviet Russia in the pamphlets on the subject published by their Commission for Foreign Relations. The figures given are: January, 1922, 160,000; January, 1924, 1,240,000; January, 1927, 1,310,000.

In that country of "nationalisation without compensation and with workers' control" the worker cannot even control his job and lines up for his "dole" of 16 roubles or 10 roubles a month, according to his category. (*Vide* above pamphlets.)

The reason is simple. No matter what party administers capitalism the basis of the system remains the same. That basis is the class-ownership of the means of wealth production and distribution. The small class which owns pays to the large

class which does not own wages for their services in industry, etc. The large class produces far more than its wages will buy; more, in fact, than even their masters, with all their extravagance, can consume.

This ever-growing surplus chokes the markets, causes plants to lie idle and puts thousands upon the industrial scrap-heap. All kinds of excuses are given to the workers for this state of affairs.

The iron and steel manufacturers tell their employees that the price of coal will not enable them to face foreign competition. It is too *high*. The coal-owners tell their wage-slaves that they cannot pay a "living wage"; the price of coal is too *low*! Prior to the strike in 1926 they were told that wages had to come down owing to the bad state of trade. Ever since then they have been told that the bad state of trade is due to the strike. The workers are first overwhelmed by means of the wealth they have produced; then they are told that their plight is due to the fact that they don't like it.

The fact of the matter is that no section of the master-class and no political party which administers or aspires to administer the present system has any solution or can have any solution to the class conflict. The workers suffer poverty because they do not own the means of wealth production.

The only logical remedy for such a state of affairs is that they shall become the owners; but that involves the destruction of existing property rights, the taking away from the master-class of their economic privileges. The Socialist Party is the only party which bases its policy on this objective, which arises by necessity from the class struggle.

We plead guilty, therefore, to being destructive—of capitalism.

As for constructive programmes, society is not an artificial structure like a house or any other building, the details of which have to be planned beforehand. The details of its structure are adjusted in the course of its development.

It is not our task to anticipate the decisions of the men and women of the future upon problems which we can only imagine and cannot definitely foresee. The forerunners of the present capitalist class overthrew feudalism, but they did not and could not map out the development of capitalism in advance. They could only remove the

political and economic obstacles to that development. Our position is somewhat similar.

The productive forces of society are held back by an outworn form of property. The human element is divorced from the mechanical element by the fact of the capitalist ownership and control of the latter. Our task is to bring the workers and their tools together again, not merely industrially but legally; not merely for production, but for the enjoyment of their products.

This will provide a new incentive to production, not the profit of the few, but the provision of the means of life for all. That, fellow-workers, is our constructive programme.

E. B.

### PROGRESS IN AUSTRALIA.

We have just received word from our comrades of the Socialist Party of Australia that the movement is making good progress there.

The headquarters of the Party are in Melbourne, and they are now forming a branch in Sydney. Like ourselves, they are beset with financial troubles owing to the unemployment and poverty of their members and the vast distances between districts. However, in spite of this, they hope soon to have their manifesto out and also a paper of their own published shortly.

We appeal to any of our sympathisers in Australia to get in touch with this new party, also to any of our readers who may know of those in Australia likely to be interested. Let them have all the assistance that can be given in membership and finance, so that they can rapidly build up a strong party for Socialism in Australia.

The wave of real Socialist development is gathering force, and it may not be long before the workers throughout the world will see that, in spite of the selling out of "Labour leaders" and the dragging of the name of Socialism in the mire of Reform and the bog of opportunism, it yet holds a message of hope for the dispossessed when its basic principles are understood and acted upon.

We wish our Australian comrades rapid and solid progress, and promise them any assistance we can give to aid them in their struggle.

### QUESTIONS ON SOCIALISM.

Sir,—(1) In your object the word "exchange" does not appear. May I ask: "How and by what means shall we secure from other countries the commodities which we require and which are not grown here?"

(2) "The working class does not pay rates or taxes which are levied upon property—the workers are property-less, therefore they do not pay." So said one of your propagandists in Hyde Park. Arising out of this, may I put another: "Do not the workers pay *indirectly* through higher rents, transport, food, clothing, etc?"

I somehow feel that *all* these levies on property are passed on to the worker. I feel that my class pays *all* of it.

Can you please spare a few lines in one of your issues to put myself and others wise on this?

I am, yours, etc.,

"INTERESTED."

### OUR REPLY.

(1) "Interested" will readily see the solution of the problem he raises when we remind him that Socialism can only come into being by replacing capitalism internationally. When he asks "By what means shall we secure from other countries," etc., he is thinking of England as a national political unit, but with Socialism the need for these national units claiming sovereign power over all internal affairs will have passed, just as city states and other kinds of full local autonomy were rendered obsolete by the formation of the modern nations.

Socialist society, through its central organisation, will arrange for the production of goods where natural and man-made conditions are favourable, and will secure their distribution to the localities where and in the quantity required.

"Exchange" does not refer to the transport of goods from place to place, but to their transfer from one private owner to another. At present it is not "England" which exchanges goods with, say, "America," but one private owner in England (quite possibly an American citizen) with another private owner in America (possibly an Englishman).

The abolition of private ownership



renders this process of exchange unnecessary, but leaves the process of distribution (or transport) as before. Already you can see illustrations of the distribution of commodities from country to country without any act of exchange. When Mr. Henry Ford sends motors or parts from Detroit to his works at Manchester, no act of exchange takes place. This is because the goods remain in the possession of the original owner. When society itself is the only owner, goods will move within the boundaries of that society without any act of exchange.

(2) *Are rates and taxes a burden on the workers?*

The Socialist says that all the wealth of capitalist society is produced by the working class, but is the property of the capitalist class, who own the machinery of production (the factories, railways, etc.). The amount received back by the workers in the form of wages and salaries is only a part of the whole. The question we have then to consider is this: Do the expenses of administering capitalism (i.e., the rates and taxes) come ultimately out of the workers' share, out of wages, or do they come out of the capitalists' share, rent, interest and profit? The question is not answered by saying that the price of certain articles bought by the workers is higher than it would be if no tax were levied on them. What we have to discover is whether the workers would be better off if taxes were reduced or abolished.

The Socialist says No!

The workers on the average receive a wage sufficient to produce and reproduce that degree of energy and skill required by the employing class. If the cost of providing the necessary food, clothing, education, amusements, medical attention, etc., rises, then the employers must, in the long run, pay higher wages or see their employees deteriorate in efficiency (i.e., in profit-producing capacity).

When prices fall, wages follow.

The figures prepared by the Ministry of Labour for the Balfour Committee support our contention.

These figures, taking March in each year, give a rough approximation of the movement of prices and wages between 1920 and 1927. Both columns represent the per-

centage increase over the 1914 level:—

		Wages.	Prices.
1920	...	130—135	130
1921	...	160—170	141
1922	...	100—105	86
1923	...	70	76
1924	...	70	78
1925	...	75	79
1926	...	75	72
1927	...	75	71

As will be seen from this, during the first year wages and prices were both about 130 per cent. above the 1914 level. In 1921 and 1922 wages were ahead; in 1923, 1924 and 1925 prices were ahead; and in the last two years wages were slightly above the price level again. On the whole, wages followed prices fairly closely. The purchasing power of the workers remained almost constant.

A reduction in the cost of living caused by the reduction or abolition of taxes merely enables the employers to purchase labour-power more cheaply. The position of the workers remains unchanged.

When "Interested" says that he feels that the working class "pays all of it," he is somewhat off the track. The workers produce all of it, but all of it when produced belongs to the capitalist class. The amount paid to the workers as wages and salaries is roughly sufficient to reproduce their skill and energy. The capitalists are compelled to pay away this amount, and are equally compelled to pay away the amount required for administering Capitalism. Any reduction in the cost of maintaining the workers (e.g., by the introduction of prohibition) or in the cost of political administration, leading to a reduction in rates and taxes, is so much clear gain to them, but not to the workers.

If "Interested" is still not clear, we shall be pleased to answer further questions. H.

**We are proposing to publish a new pamphlet, but we cannot do so until we have the money. If we print 20,000 copies the cost will be in the neighbourhood of £100. We ask, therefore, for donations. As soon as we get sufficient to justify giving the order to our printer we shall be pleased to proceed.**

## PROVINCIAL PROPAGANDA TOUR—A REPORT.

A motor propaganda tour was organised with a view to stimulating interest in the Party in provincial centres. In view of the difficulties imposed by finance, breakdowns, and bad weather the results were exceedingly satisfactory and full of promise for the future. The following is a brief record of the tour:—

**August 25th.**—Left London via the Great North Road. Reached Coventry at dusk. A small meeting was held which was not very good owing to lateness of the day. At night-fall the van set off for Birmingham. Halfway to Birmingham the tent was pitched for the night.

**August 26th.**—Broke camp and headed for Birmingham. At about 11.15 the Bull Ring was reached and by 11.30 a good meeting was in progress. An audience of 500 odd listened attentively, but were dispersed by rain. An evening meeting was commenced at 7.0 o'clock, the audience, estimated at 1,500, was scattered by a sudden down-pour of rain. Despite these setbacks 200 odd remained to listen in the pouring rain. The attempted meetings of other organisations failed completely. Arrangements for a further two meetings to take place on Monday, the 27th, were cancelled owing to bad weather. Departed for Hanley.

**August 27th.**—Engine trouble having developed, Hanley was not reached till night-time. A very hearty welcome was received from local comrades.

**August 28th.**—An evening meeting with an estimated audience of 300 was carried on despite police interference.

**August 29th.**—An audience of about 500 at a meeting in Hanley Market Place.

**August 30th.**—The suburbs of Burslem were next visited. The going was heavy all the way and the rain persisted. A good meeting was held.

**August 31st.**—Left Hanley for Manchester. Tent pitched on the outskirts and entered the town next morning.

**September 1st.**—An afternoon meeting held in the suburbs of Manchester. Police interference and the threat of a summons were overcome. In the evening a large meeting was held in the centre of Manchester (Oxford Road) with very good results.

**September 2nd.**—This being a Sunday, meetings were held in the morning, the afternoon, and the evening. The morning meeting was poor but in the afternoon the Tour had its best meeting in Stephenson's Square, the audience numbering a good thousand. In the evening held a meeting in opposition to the Eccles Labour Candidate.

**September 3rd.**—Departure for Sheffield. Spent night on the moors. Engine trouble.

**September 4th.**—Engine failure upset arrangements for Sheffield.

**September 7th.**—Resumed journey to Nottingham, arriving there in the evening. An audience captured from The Economic League provided an interesting meeting.

**September 8th.**—Derby was next in view, but owing to engine trouble it was not reached till night-fall, and once again an evening meeting was lost.

**September 9th.**—A small morning and a large evening meeting were held in Derby Market Place. A group of sympathisers was discovered and a number of membership forms were left with an ex-member for distribution with a view to forming a Branch. These sympathisers were also linked up with the Burton Comrades.

**September 10th.**—Burton was reached at night-fall, an evening meeting having again been lost through engine trouble.

**September 11th.**—Held a meeting which was considered quite good in view of the fact that the town is owned by the Brewers and the Burton workers are therefore wary of Socialist activities.

**September 12th.**—A good midday meeting at Swadlincote (a mining area). The van next headed for Leicester. Nothing could be done at Leicester because the roads were filled with stalls, it being Market Day.

**September 13th.**—Northampton provided a good meeting which was maintained in spite of a "dog fight" between the supporters of the Brewers and the Teetotallers.

**September 14th.**—The van left for London, and covered the 60 odd miles without a hitch.

Total Collections: £5 18s. 5d.

Total Literature Sales: £3 10s. 10d.

## WALTHAMSTOW

A LECTURE

By

Comrade A. JACOBS,

At

Hoe Street Co-Operative Hall

(Near Bakers Arms.)

SUNDAY, 21st October at 7.15 p.m.

Subject:

**"WHY SOCIALISTS OPPOSE THE LABOUR PARTY."**

**NOW ON SALE!**

A Reprint of the Second Edition

OF

**"Socialism and Religion."**

This unique Party Pamphlet is now reprinted at a price within the reach of all.

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**OFFICIAL NOTICE.**

All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 17, Mount Pleasant, London, W.C.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable. The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

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**The Socialist Standard,**

OCTOBER,



1928

**THE COMMERCIALISATION OF SCIENCE.**

Another Annual Conference of the British Association has come and gone. The topic of most importance appears to have been the alleged parlous plight of British industry.

Britain used to be "the workshop of the world." Now it is not. Its industrial capitalists no longer receive what they consider to be their fair share of the plunder of the world's toilers. For some years past the capitalists of other countries have shown a callous disregard for the sensitive Britishers' feelings and betrayed their utter lack of a sense of decency by developing their productive capacity on modern lines, to the detriment of the erstwhile champion thieves of Europe.

Hence our masters are concerned to discover ways and means of intensifying the exploitation of the British workers, and the scientists are the boys they entrust with the job. Professor Sir William Bragg set the keynote by dwelling upon what he described as the intermediary position of the technical expert between capital and labour. The expert, he maintained, could see both sides, and thus help to produce harmony instead of conflict. In gastronomic phraseo-

logy, he might be said to play the part of the pancreatic juices operating upon the tender loin of the labour lamb (not so tender perhaps as formerly) within the ravenous maw of the lion capital. The chemist and the physicist improve the processes by which living labour is incorporated in the material framework of capitalist industry. The psychologist studies and seeks to economise the movements of the labourer. All are concerned with the elimination of waste, the reduction of the effort needed to achieve a given result, and thus to increase the return on a given amount of capital invested in wages.

Of course, the industrialists and their henchmen, the scientists, have little choice. Efficiency has enabled the U.S.A. and Germany to become the formidable rivals for world commerce that they are, and Britain has no alternative but to follow suit. We are merely concerned to show the absurdity of the supposition that rationalisation can solve the class conflict.

Industrially, of course, it makes the workers easier prey, but by so doing it intensifies the very evils from which they suffer and seek to escape. Unemployment, on the one hand, and over-work on the other, increase with every scientific advance, while the struggle against these effects takes place on a national scale and assumes by degrees (though unconsciously at first) a political form.

Our readers only need to follow events in other countries to see the similarity of causes producing similar effects. They may ask, however, Has science said its last word?

We answer that, so far as offering any solution to the social problem is concerned, technology and the so-called exact sciences certainly have. They are valuable to those in a position to make use of them (at present the capitalist class) mainly in relation to production, but production is no longer a problem, taking society as a whole. The question is what to do with the enormous surplus produced.

The individual capitalist group or nation attempts to answer this question by producing more cheaply than its competitors, and thus getting rid of its share of the surplus by selling at a profit; but as all groups must endeavour to follow suit or expire, the surplus grows and the problem is intensified. War offers temporary relief

only, and stalking behind war comes what?—the social revolution! Hence Peace Pacts which do not guarantee peace. Disarmament agreements which do not disarm.

In this social anarchy the professional scientist is a mere hireling tool, an intellectual prostitute. His attempt to pronounce on the social conflict is an arrogant impertinence, insulting the intelligence of the worker, who refuses to put out his thinking as he does his washing.

The Socialist alone points the way of escape for mankind from their disastrous servitude to the diminishing groups of capitalist parasites, because he deals with the basic facts of social existence.

To the Socialist, the production of the means of living is a social process in which the professional scientist is but a unit. Whether he be engaged in the study of the stupendous by means of a telescope or of the infinitesimal by means of a microscope, he has to be fed, clothed and housed by the labour of others. Others have to delve and blast, to fuse, grind and polish in order to provide the materials for his instruments. They have to assemble and adjust these delicate instruments to his exact requirements. Others must collect rags and hew timber to provide paper that others, again, may print and bind in order that the accumulated knowledge of the ages may be stored in a form convenient for his reference.

At every turn he is dependent from first to last upon the active co-operation of millions of his fellow beings, not to speak of those with whom he comes in direct contact and with whom he must compare notes and check his findings.

He is the product of his age. It is no accident that radium was not discovered by a cannibal islander, who would not have known what to do with it.

Seeing, therefore, that the scientist is thus dependent upon society, his status in turn is determined by the particular form of the society which produces him. His means of living are the property of the capitalist class. They subsidise his university and endow his professional chair; maintain his technical institutes, found laboratories and colleges. Is it any wonder, then, that they exact their pound of flesh; or, to be more precise, that, having provided him with the kingdoms of earth, they demand

the surrender of his intellectual independence. Professional science plays "Faust" to the capitalist "Mephistopheles." Its function is the rape of labour.

There is, however, a germ of truth in the hackneyed adage that money cannot buy everything. It did not buy the brain of the great scientist, Karl Marx. With the aid of his friend, Friedrich Engels, he penned the economic masterpiece "Capital," which shatters the pretences and confounds the conceit of the servile, lickspittle bullies of the "intellectual (?) middle class," and provided food for the workers' brains and nerved them for their last fight.

**CORRUPT AMERICA AND PURE ENGLAND.**

There is one thing for which we, as Britishers, can never be sufficiently grateful, and that is the white-souled purity of our political institutions. In this, of course, we are unique among nations. In the U.S.A. politics and graft have long been interchangeable terms. France, it is well known, is a seething hotch-potch of franc speculators, anti-clericals, Bourbonists and a score of others. Italy is in the grip of a tyranny worse than Nero's, and Spain is making revolution a habit. Germany—bah, you can't trust these Junkers; and Russia (pause, for snarl and baring of teeth) has changed the knout and Siberia for the Cheka and sudden death. Only we, the fortunate dwellers in this little isle, set in a silver sea, remain as we have ever been, pure, unspotted, a pattern for the world. Was it not we who invented that institution now known as the Mother of Parliaments? Very well, then. Let us remain as we have endured down the ages—pure, unsullied, immaculate, above reproach; the envy of a world filled with foreigners; a secret and holy joy to ourselves.

And what is this man Baker doing? Surely he must know all this! Surely he will have weighed the wild and whirling words with which he besmirches the reputation of our Parliament House! And yet the painful fact must be faced. Hansard, we cannot permit ourselves to doubt, else follows chaos and confusion. And that patient record of our rulers' murmurings recounts that, on August 2nd of this present year, Mr. Walter Baker rose in his place in



the House of Commons and delivered himself of the following scandals. He said the Government was proposing to transfer its Beam system of telegraphy to a private firm, and that the circumstances leading up to that decision were disgraceful and scandalous. He reminded them that he had previously stated that the merger between the cable companies and the Marconi Company was a calculated attempt to force the hands of the Government, and that it was accompanied by a treacherous threat to let the cables go derelict. He mentioned the enormous cash reserves, £14,000,000, which, with the aid of Government subsidies, the cable companies had built up; and then he turned to Marconi's. After referring to continued serious charges made against the methods of the directors of that firm, he made the remarkable statement that the Marconi Company had been engaged in selling shares in the Spanish and General Corporation for about 1½d. each, shares which were now worth 38s. 6d. He asserted the latter firm had no assets of any value, and the tremendous jump in price was attributable to pure manipulation. What he wished to learn was why a certain newspaper persistently quoted these shares as "Spanish Marconi," when the company had nothing to do with wireless; why the Marconi Company had found it necessary to sell them at 1½d. each; and why the shares had experienced the tremendous rise to 38s. 6d. whilst the firm had no assets of any value. He further mentioned how uncomfortable he felt at finding an M.P. (the junior Member for Norwich) as one of the new directors of the Spanish and General Corporation. As for the Marconi Company, he recalled to the House the fact that this company had recently written down its capital by about 50 per cent. As a result of a powerful circular to the shareholders, the reduction was agreed to, and the shares had a sensational fall to 12s. The circular was signed by Sir William Plender, Sir Robert Kindersley, the Hon. Charles White, Dr. E. Ofenheim and the Earl of Leicester. It was not disclosed to the shareholders, he said, that Sir William Plender, in addition to being auditor for the cable companies, was the cable companies' negotiator in the transactions between them and Marconi. Further, at the date on which Sir Robert Kindersley signed the circular, he was not the registered holder of a single share. But through the Cushion Trust, a subsidiary of

Lazard Bros., he was acquiring thousands of shares at a low price during March and April, 1927. By October 25th, 1927, those shares were quoted at 38s., and on March 14th, 1928, they had reached 67s. 6d.

Civil servants will be glad to hear of a process which will render them independent of wage cuts based on fluctuations in the cost of living. Railwaymen will gather new hope when they discover how to more than compensate themselves for relinquishing 2½ per cent. of their earnings. Listen to this.

Mr. Baker next recounted that on December 31st, 1925, the Marconi Company held 1,238,658 shares in the Canadian Marconi Company. The Marconi directors wrote down the value of those shares to 2s. 1d. a share, and then sold the shares to Sir Robert Kindersley, that is, to the Cushion Trust, at 4s. 2d. a share. To-day they are quoted at about 30s. The Cushion Trust, the nominee company of Lazard Bros., who held 5,485 shares in the Marconi Company at the end of November, 1927, had increased their holding at the beginning of 1928 to 51,800 shares.

Mr. Baker then dealt with a few of the personalities involved and their associations. There was the hon. and gallant member for Ripon (Major Hills), who on a previous occasion had expressed his concern at the danger of the Government losing the taxpayer's money by continuing its control of Beam wireless. Besides "other interests," he was discovered to be a director of the group which controls the most important financial papers in the City of London. There was Viscount Wolmer, who, after three years as Assistant Postmaster-General, made an attack on the Post Office as a State enterprise. This attack curiously enough coincided with this campaign, and, equally curiously, with the publication of the Hardman Lever Report, a report which went beyond the terms of reference of the Committee and attacked State management of the telegraph services. The Chairman of this Committee is a director of the *Daily Mail* Trust, and the *Daily Mail* has hopes of becoming the greatest newspaper in the world, through the medium of wireless. The father of Viscount Wolmer, Lord Selborne, is Chairman of the Telegraph Construction and Maintenance Company. More than a third of the shares of this Company are owned by the Eastern and South African Telegraph Company and the Globe Telegraph and

Trust Company, both members of the merger. Lord Selborne is a director of Lloyds Bank, which shares a director with the Marconi Wireless Telegraph Company, besides being a director of the Peninsular and Oriental Banking Corporation, another director of which sits on the board of the African Direct Telegraph Company and the Eastern Telegraph Company. Sir Robert Kindersley was formerly a director of the Eastern Telegraph Company. He is now one of the directors of the Bank of England and managing director of Lazard Bros., who purchased the shares of the Canadian Marconi Company.

With which interesting information we propose to close down just here and publish a further contribution next month. After all, the long winter evenings are approaching, and we hope we are performing a public service by providing something to fill the blank hour on Sundays when the sky pilots are groaning from 2LO. Perhaps some worker may be stirred into thinking that the forces of capital are by no means asleep; that they will not be fought by grudging shillings in a trade union box and occasional pence to a political party. Socialism, the alternative to Capitalism, will not "come of itself." Its achievement will require effort, hard unremitting effort. Sympathy is not enough. It is work that counts; planned, disciplined work. Come in.

W. T. H.

## A LECTURE

Battersea Town (lower) Hall,

SUNDAY 14th OCTOBER.

Subject:

"WHY WE ARE OPPOSED TO OTHER POLITICAL PARTIES."

Meeting Commences at 7.30 p.m.

YOUR newsagent can obtain the "Socialist Standard" through the wholesalers, W. H. Smith & Son. Ask him to get your copy, but if you have any difficulty send direct to 17, Mount Pleasant, London, W.C.1.

## THE SECRET OF NO WAGES.

In *Business Organisation* (August) a writer comments on the American instalment system, and offers what he appears to think is expert advice. He says: "It is time that the whole British business world should get to grips with the subject in order to set a similar ball of prosperity rolling in our own land. . . . The theory is: If the people buy the goods, workers will be wanted to make them, and presently shirt-sleeved employers will be rushing into the street shouting, 'We want workers, we must have workers.'" Note the IF. If they cannot buy the goods—what then? For years we have shown that American industry must travel the way of all capitalist industry. That way is by "boom" and "slump," with ever-shortening periods between them until, with regulated and curtailed production, comes continued depression, as in this country to-day. The greater the competition for markets the greater the problem of over-production or restricting production. The value represented by wages never allows the workers to purchase all the enormous wealth they produce. The instalment trading system could not save America from the effects of Capitalism any more than it has done here. Such methods show that numbers of workers can no longer purchase for cash, and in America it might defer the crisis, but it would only aggravate it when it came. According to the *Daily Telegraph* (3/4.28), the crisis in due course arrived. The "shout for workers" will evidently now become one for markets and buyers:—

Labour agencies report that unemployment throughout the country has increased from four million to almost six million. . . . The American Federation of Labour finds that 18 per cent. of union members are unemployed, at any rate, it is represented that the total unemployed based upon 40,000,000 workers would be 7,200,000.

No wonder we have not heard so much lately of American prosperity, and what a warning to those workers whose hope for the future lies in the day when they might again have "more work."

\* \* \*

## TO BE OR NOT TO BE.

It is no longer possible to pretend that the existing depression is a transient phenomenon. Clearly its causes are deep-rooted, and it has come to stay unless resolute measures are taken to abate or remove the causes ("Morning Post," 11/8/28).

What an admission from these staunch



defenders of Capitalism, and how significant, though not in the Socialist sense, is their "unless." Obviously the remedy is not in capitalist hands, or they would not confess to utter failure and inability to remove evils that must more and more compel the workers to ask the eternal Why? Why depressing conditions for themselves, while they produce for others who take no part in such production a once unthought-of degree of wealth and luxury? There is only one answer, and one that only the Socialist dare give—wealth belongs to those who own the means of producing it. No amount of reform or adjustment within the present system can alter that fundamental fact. While the wealth produced increases by leaps and bounds, our masters are at their wits' end to sell, waste or spend it. The producers, separated from their means of life, cannot command more than that which only secures on the average an existence. To our masters that arrangement is the best and only possible one, hence the wish is father to the thought: "It has come to stay." Out of the mountain of depression comes forth the mouse; for we are told:—

It is incontestable that we are living beyond our means. . . . What can we afford? (Ibid).

We! Wage workers! Surely a joke. Relative poverty and pauperism grow apace. In Great Britain and Northern Ireland in 1927 there were 562 millionaires—and over (*Daily Express* (18/2/28)). The estates of the ten millionaires who died in 1927 paid nearly ten million in death duties alone (17th Report, Inland Revenue Commissioners).

There were more millions lost and won this year at Deauville than ever before in its history. It is estimated that 40 million changed hands. . . . One noted motor car manufacturer lost about £8,000 in ten essays one night ("Daily Herald," 7/9/28).

True, the cause of these contrasts is deep-rooted, nor are your depressing conditions merely transitional. But whether they have "come to stay" depends on whether you intend to continue allowing an idle few to enjoy the results of your efforts. Capitalism cannot work out to your benefit. The capitalists do not need Socialism, nor will they desire it because your suffering becomes more acute. Socialism goes to the root cause of working-class poverty. It lies in Capitalism or the private ownership of the means of wealth production. By the substitution of common ownership you

will ensure the leisurely enjoyment of the plenitude you now provide for others.

\* \* \*

#### THE PEACE PACT FARCE.

Peace, perfect peace, until the next war! Some tell us we are cynical, distrustful, and do not want peace. We do—but can Capitalism ever give it? We remember the peace tale in the days of yore. Did not Lloyd George tell us that he "saw distinct signs of peace" almost on the eve of the "war to end war"? Did not the Labourites demonstrate in favour of peace; and who could out-jingo them when war came? Does not the pacifist I.L.P. stand for reduction of armaments when out of office and vote for cruisers when in office? The signing of the Kellogg Peace Pact is yet another piece of hypocrisy on a par with the League of Nations. It is merely to allay suspicion while our masters prepare. In referring to the Pact, Sir Wm. Joynson-Hicks said:—

I would warn you not to expect too much of this pact. . . . The whole of the nations of the world are still armed to the teeth, and this new pact is but one more expression of the opinion that war is wrong, hateful and undesirable ("Times," 10/9/28).

One more pious expression, with the world still armed to the teeth! Will that prevent war? We do not single out a special hatred for capitalist war any more than we do for its other abominations—unemployment, poverty and needless overwork. We stand as Socialists for the ending of Capitalism and with it the noxious maladies it begets. Those who support Capitalism through political ignorance are ever likely to be led into both voting and fighting for it while they remain in that mental state. Capitalism requires armed force, apart from military war. It is the final word in their political control over the working class. The further need for armed force as a means to defend and extend trade facilities is stated in terms of brutal frankness in the same speech: ". . . There is one fundamental question we have to consider more than any other. That is the safety of Nation, Empire, and our trade routes." We, the workers, are not the "Nation," we are the slave class within the nation. The "Empire" and the trade routes are the private property of our masters; they form channels through which they dispose of the wealth of which you

have been robbed and over which wars are fought and working-class lives sacrificed. MAC.

#### THE PLAIN CASE FOR SOCIALISM.

(Continued from September issue.)

##### IS SOCIALISM POSSIBLE?

Do you say it is impossible? But the steam engine, the ocean liner and the aeroplane were impossible until they became work accomplished. If everybody had accepted the assertion that such things were impossible they would have remained so. And similarly if all working people were to accept the oft-repeated statement that Socialism is impossible it would remain so.

The capitalist and, the people he pays to write and speak for him, assert that Socialism is impossible. But this is to be expected as capitalism means to the capitalist the continuance of his present easy and luxurious mode of living while Socialism signifies the end of it. One cannot expect the doomed to welcome the gravedigger. Socialism only has a message for the working-class because, from a narrow point of view, it is they who will benefit by it. Socialism means the taking from the rich of the power to exploit the poor—from the idlers of the power to live on the backs of the workers. One cannot expect the Rockefellers, the Rothschilds or the Mondys to do other than oppose Socialism and urge upon workers its impossibility.

##### CAPITAL IS NOT NECESSARY.

What arguments are brought forward to bolster up the case for "impossibility"? Once upon a time it was urged that individualism must have free-play, that it was only human nature for each man to fight for his own hand. But since that day the mammoth trust has come into existence, and poison gas has been invented, so the individualism argument has been conveniently forgotten. Nowadays more attention is paid to the plea that capital is necessary, but unfortunately the definitions of capital vary to suit the times. We need not worry for the moment about the correct definition of capital, we can take them on their own ground and show the poorness of their case. If by capital it is intended to signify large works, gigantic machinery, huge pieces of land, then it is sufficient to point out, in the words of the old song,

"we all came into the world with nothing" and that no one has supreme authority to give anyone else the "Right" to any land or anything else. The land was once free to the whole human race of the time; sections of people from time to time have acquired more and more of it for their own private use by one dodge or another. In England during the last few centuries millions of acres have been stolen from the people under the "Enclosure" system by those who had control of political power. All the factories and machinery have been built and made by the hands of working people who have been deprived of the things they have made. Because fortune decrees that a man shall be born into the owning class does that confer upon him a natural "Right" that he shall therefore own? Is it not rather a social "Right" determined by the general agreement that "it shall be so"? Which can be set aside at a moment's notice by the general agreement that "it shall not be so any longer." All so-called "Rights" depend upon the general agreement of the mass of the people; there are neither natural nor super-natural "Rights." A king is a king because the majority of people have decided to look upon him as such—he is not born with a crown growing out of his head!

As people working together have produced the factories and machinery of the past under the domination of capitalism, they can do likewise in the future under the free institutions of Socialism. This disposes of the myth based on the alleged necessity of Capital for the carrying on of industry in the future.

If we take the argument that capital is money and industry will be unable to get on without it, the reply is easier still.

##### NO MONEY UNDER SOCIALISM.

We can take, as illustration, the case of the much eulogised early pioneers who cut their way through the trackless forests of uncivilised parts. They felled trees, built cabins, trapped and trained animals and provided for their elementary needs for months and years without the need of a penny piece, and for a reason that is obvious after a few moments' thought. If the production and distribution of the world's goods were on a Socialist basis then matters would be so arranged that the quantities of goods required at a specified point would be sent there. For instance when an army



was equipped for the "front" supplies were accumulated and despatched to various points to meet their needs—the individual soldier did not pay for his food, clothing, etc. Thus those who were making pottery would have supplies of the things they needed sent to them and their "pots" would be despatched to the places requiring them; and so on over the whole field of world production, assuming, of course, that, as now, different localities specialised in particular productions.

Money is only necessary in a society where there is private ownership and trading and therefore some common means needed in which to assess the values of diverse articles in order to facilitate exchanges. Where common property exists there is no exchange of goods but an equitable distribution on the basis of needs—as a mother distributes food to her children at the table—and therefore neither the necessity nor the room for money in any form except as an ornament or a relic of the ugly past.

#### THE SOCIALIST APPEAL.

In a few words, under Socialism the production and distribution of wealth would be organised on a scientific basis with the object of providing for each member of society the least amount of labour, the best conditions of labour, and the greatest amount of leisure—which latter he could employ in whatever work or play suited him. By this means, and only by this means, will unemployment, poverty and other economic evils that we suffer to-day disappear never to return.

This is the aim of the Socialist Party of Great Britain. But to achieve this end we must first obtain possession of Political Power, the power centred in England in the Parliament at Westminster. We are pushing forward the work of adopting prospective candidates for Parliament, but are sadly hampered by the paucity of our financial resources. We have opened a Parliamentary Fund to meet this need, but it is not growing as fast as it should. The hungry mouths will not be filled until Socialism is here. There is only one Party in this country taking the road that leads to Socialism, and that Party is the S.P. of G.B. Until the majority of workers are with us, and until we have a majority of delegates knocking at the doors of Parliament, the road to the new world is blocked.

Subscriptions to our Parliamentary Fund will be a considerable assistance on the way.  
GILMAC.

### RATIONALISATION OR SOCIALISM.

The capitalist system of society is based upon the private ownership of the means of wealth production and distribution, by a minority of the population. The majority of the population, being property-less, are compelled to offer their services for sale to the capitalists, and receive in return sufficient to enable them to live and keep on working. Only the working class engage in the work necessary to production, but the wealth that results from the workers' labour-power belongs to the capitalists, and therefore the system is an excellent one—for the capitalists.

This being so, any proposals which have for their object the smoother working of the present system should be welcomed—by the capitalists.

The system is essentially a competitive one, and though the capitalists' interests are identical as against working-class interests, they are not identical in the struggle to secure the greater proportion of the profit accruing from the workers' labour-power. This results in a tremendous waste. In most industries there is more plant and machinery in being than is necessary to produce sufficient to supply the markets; consequently many works are on short time, not working to their full capacity, or are actually closed down.

Thoroughly up-to-date and efficient methods of production exist side by side with inefficient, almost obsolete, methods.

These facts are fairly obvious, and attempts are being made to meet the problem, but we are concerned about it being clearly understood whose problem it is.

To increase the difference between the total wealth the workers produce and the amount they receive in the form of wages has always been the object of the capitalists, and what is referred to as rationalisation is only a phase of that estimable object.

In an article in the *Daily Herald* (August 24th), Mr. Citrine attempts to justify the action of the T.U.C. in acting in conjunction with a group of employers to secure "the maximum efficiency of labour with the minimum of effort," to avoid "waste of

raw materials and power" and "unnecessary transport, burdensome financial charges, and the useless interposition of middlemen." As the General Council of the T.U.C. is supposed to represent the interests of the wage workers, it was up to Mr. Citrine to demonstrate that the object of these proposals is *not* to increase the difference between total wages and total profits.

Instead of doing this he proceeds to ignore the class division in society and indulge in vague talk about the "community," and increasing the standard of living of the "people."

As the article was a reply to a previous one by Mr. Hicks, he brings forward evidence to show that his attitude is quite in accordance with Trade Union policy both here and abroad, instancing a report published by the T.U.C. and the Labour Party in 1924 on the Waste of Capitalism, which, as he says, "was, in effect, a demand for the rational organisation of industry." He also points out that the German Trade Union movement took the initiative in demanding the institution of Rationalisation in 1926.

To be able to give evidence of other suicidal policies is regarded as sufficient justification of the present one. We have some indication of how Rationalisation works in Germany in an article in the *Manchester Guardian* Industrial Relations Supplement (30/11/27), by C. W. Guillebaud. One of the "concessions" to the workers is the institution of Works Councils, on which both workers and employers sit; and the writer points out that "One most significant feature of the development of the Works Councils has been the great decline in the number of those willing to submit themselves for election or re-election. . . . The chief causes of this tendency are, first, the power of employers to get rid of Works Councillors, . . . despite the protective provisions of the Act."

It should be obvious that a worker with orthodox views will be a useful man for the employers, but one who realises the direct cleavage of interests between the two sides, and says so, will be given his cards and shown the gate.

Although the Trade Unions arose from the antagonism of interests between the property-owning employers and the property-less wage workers, they frequently function

in the interests of the capitalists. The railway workers' unions have recently *successfully* negotiated a 2½ per cent. reduction in their members' wages, without the trouble and expense of a lock-out. While having a clear idea of the purpose of "rationalisation," it is necessary to point out to the self-styled "left-wingers" that it is not something to be fought *separately*. At the annual conference of the National Minority Movement, Mr. Harry Pollitt moved a resolution which declared that "the chief issue before the working class was to fight Rationalisation" (*Daily Herald*, August 27).

Certain phrases seem to knock these shallow pates off their balance; "Mondism" and "Imperialism" are manifestations of capitalism. One is reminded of 1914, when the counterparts of the present left-wingers considered it "progressive" to fight against Prussianism.

The opening paragraph of this article being correct, the *only* problem the workers need concern themselves about is their non-possession of the means of wealth production, the solution of which is in their own hands, by organising as a class, *politically*, to take possession of them. The Socialist Party is the only organisation which concentrates the workers' attention on that problem. Labour right-wingers, who urge the workers to take an interest in their masters' problems, and left-wingers, who urge them to attack separate features of capitalism, are equally side-tracking them from the thing that matters. J. L.

### S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS

#### LONDON DISTRICT.

- |                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| <b>Sundays</b> ...   | Clapham Common, 3 p.m.<br>Tottenham, West Green Corner, 11.30 a.m.<br>Tooting, Garrett Lane, Tooting Broadway, 7.30 p.m.<br>Victoria Park, 4 p.m.<br>Woolwich, Beresford Square, 7.30 p.m.<br>Hyde Park, 11.30 p.m.<br>Paddington, Prince of Wales, 8 p.m. |
| <b>Mondays</b> ...   | Paddington, Prince of Wales, 8 p.m.<br>Clerkenwell, Garnault Place, 8 p.m.<br>Camberwell, Wren Road, 8 p.m.  |
| <b>Wednesdays</b>    | Hackney, Paragon Road and Mare Street, 8 p.m.<br>Paddington, Prince of Wales, 8 p.m.   |
| <b>Thursdays</b> ... | Becontree, Rodney Street, Ilford, 8 p.m.   |
| <b>Fridays</b> ...   | Clerkenwell, Acton St., Grays Inn Rd., 8 p.m.<br>West Ham, Water Lane, 8 p.m.  |
| <b>Saturdays</b> ... | Wood Green, Jolly Butchers Hill, 8 p.m.<br>Leyton, Corner Grange Park, 7.30 p.m.   |

#### HANLEY BRANCH.

- |                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| <b>Sundays</b> ... | Hanley Market Square, 7 p.m.<br>Burslem, St. John Square, 7 p.m. |
|--------------------|--|



## BRANCH DIRECTORY.

- BATTERSEA.**—Sec., 2, Hanbury-road, S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns-road. Discussion second Thurs. in month.
- BECONTREE.**—Sec., Hy. Gratton, 4, Drummond Ave., Brooklands, Romford. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 7.30, at above address.
- BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec. E. Jesper, 88, Rollason-rd., Erdington. Branch meets The Continental Café, Moor St., 1st and 3rd Sundays at 11 a.m.
- CAMBERWELL.**—Sec., J. Goodfellow, 40, Solon New Road, Clapham, S.W.4. Branch meets at Camberwell Trades Council Room, 6A, Artichoke Place, Camberwell Green, every Friday at 8.30 p.m. Discussions—public invited.
- CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.
- CLERKENWELL.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at 17, Mount Pleasant, W.C.1. Discussions first Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.—all invited. Sec., at above address.
- EAST LONDON.**—Sec., D. Jacobs, 28, Lyal Road, Bow, E.3.
- GLASGOW.**—Sec. W. Falconer, 128, Bluevale Street. Branch meets every Thursday, 7.30 p.m., Unitarian Church Hall, Ross Street, Glasgow. Public invited. Discussions.
- HACKNEY.**—Branch meets The Old Gravel Pit Hall, Mare-street, Hackney, Mondays, 8 p.m., Discussions 9.30. Communication to Sec. as above.
- HANLEY.**—Branch meets Tuesdays, Working Men's Club, Glass-st. Sec., F. Goldstraw, 38, Paddock Street, Hanley.
- ISLINGTON.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 144, Seven Sister-rd., Holloway, N. Sec., M. Baker, 18, Orpingley-rd., N.7.
- LEYTON.**—Sec., A. Holland, 396, Lea Bridge-rd., Leyton. Branch meets 8 p.m., Trades and Labour Hall, Grove House, High-rd., every Monday. Public invited.
- MANCHESTER.**—Sec., W. Addison, 111, West Park-street, Salford, Manchester.—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month, 7.45 p.m., at 114, Duke St., Stretford-road.
- PADDINGTON.**—Branch meeting held on 2nd and 4th Fridays, 8 p.m., in room above the Co-operative Stores, 306, Kilburn-lane, W.9 (side door).
- SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Sec., J. Bird, 5 Welling-ton-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.
- TOOTING.**—Sec., 15, University-road, Collier's Wood, S.W. 19. Branch meets every Friday at 8 p.m. at Tooting Adult School, 971, Garratt-lane, S.W. 17.
- TOTTENHAM.**—Secretary, 18, Woodlands Park Rd., N.15. Branch meets Fridays, Room 2, Trades Hall, 7, Bruce Grove. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.
- WALTHAMSTOW.**—Sec., S. E. Williams, 3, Dyson-rd., Leytonstone, E.11. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.
- WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107 Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at Secretary's address.

**WEST HAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford rd., Stratford. Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

**WOOD GREEN.**—All communications to Sec., F. W. Godfrey, 71, Falkland Road, N.8.

**WOOLWICH.**—Branch meets at 94, Griffin Road, Plumstead. Communications to Secretary at above address.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interests of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great HOLDS— Britain

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



# THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

No. 291. Vol. 25.]

LONDON, NOVEMBER, 1928.

[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

## THE LABOUR MACHINE IN CONFERENCE.

The 1928 Labour Party Conference met in Birmingham during the first week of October. The chief work before the delegates was the consideration of the "Programme of Legislation and Administrative Action for a Labour Government," which had been drafted by the National Executive on the instruction of the 1927 Conference. The draft programme has already been dealt with in these columns. It contains a large number of social, administrative and industrial reforms, the application of which will, in the view of the Labour Party, solve the pressing problems of modern society. It is impossible in a few sentences to summarise the large number of proposals, but it may be said that they continue and extend the policy of past and present Liberal and Tory Governments, in providing legislative safeguards against excessive hours of work, dangerous and unhealthy factory conditions, and propose better provision for those who are prevented from securing employment through illness, old age, trade depression, and so forth. A reduction in the inequalities of income is promised by means of taxes and death duties, and peace is to be secured through the League of Nations. The industry of this country is to be placed in a condition of prosperity primarily through a reorganisation on the lines of State ownership: It is this latter point which is regarded by Labour supporters as marking off the Labour Programme from all others. By it the Labour Party stands or falls.

### NOT A SOCIALIST PROGRAMME.

As this programme of reforms embodies the opinions of the bulk of the members of the Labour Party, its acceptance was to be expected, and as the great bulk of the workers, in and out of the Trade Unions,

are not in favour of Socialism, it follows as a matter of course that the programme acceptable to them contains no reference to Socialism. The essential features of Capitalism are: one, the ownership of the means of wealth production by a propertied class which lives by owning; two, the sale of their labour-power by the property-less majority for salaries or wages; and three, the production of goods for sale.

The Labour Party does not propose now or hereafter, constitutionally or unconstitutionally, gradually or suddenly, to abolish these essential features of the Capitalist economic system. Under "Nationalisation," mineowners, railway owners, bank shareholders and others who now live on property incomes, will still live on property incomes. Their respective industries will be subject to State control, and the State will guarantee to them their privilege of living on the interest from State bonds at the expense of the wealth producers. The working-class will be what the postal workers are already, the wage-slaves of the Capitalist State. And so far from abolishing production for sale, the Labour Party believes that their policy will enable this country to sell more cheaply in face of foreign competition.

We reject that programme and the assumptions underlying it. We say that only with the advent of Socialism will the poverty and insecurity of the workers and their unemployment be brought to an end.

The risk of war will be removed only with the removal of the commercial rivalries of Capitalism. The Labour Programme will fail, not because of the personal merits or demerits of its leaders, but because it is wholly a programme of reforms of Capitalism.



**"NATIONALISATION" NOT SOCIALISM.**

A number of "left-wing" delegates criticised the programme as being "Liberal." Mr. Clynes, speaking for the Executive took up the challenge. He said ("Daily Herald," 4th October):—

Mr. Wheatley had said that any Liberal would accept most of the programme. Would the Liberals accept such proposals as the public ownership of mines, transport, power, and land? The answer is, yes, they would.

The Liberal "Yellow Book" (p. 229), proposes the nationalisation of agricultural land, and the public ownership of electricity production (p. 82). The Liberals stand for the retention of the public ownership of the Post Office, the telegraphs and telephones. Capitalist governments in different parts of the world have nationalised mines (Germany), railways (France), and shipping (U.S.A. and Australia). The Labour Party's scheme of public ownership is simply State Capitalism, and as such does not differentiate them from the Liberals. The Liberal "Manchester Guardian," in an editorial, defined the position of the Liberal Party and the slight difference between its position and that of the Labour Party. For the Liberals "the case for nationalisation must be discussed on its merits as applied to any particular industry," whereas for the Labour Party "it is stated as a general principle applicable to all industries." (October 9th, 1928.)

To this we would add that the Socialist Party does not advocate nationalisation at all.

**THE LABOUR "LEFT WING."**

But although there were several delegates who declared the Labour Party Programme to be simply a collection of Liberal reforms, none of the critics is prepared to advocate Socialism in opposition to the Liberalism of the Labour Party. All of them come to heel when faced with the threat of disciplinary action. Thus W. J. Brown, of the Civil Service Clerical Association, said ("Daily Herald," October 4th):—

If the whole of the programme were put into effect . . . it would not be Socialism, but a system of State-subsidised Capitalism.

But Mr. Brown is a Labour Candidate and will fight the next election as he has fought past elections, on the Labour Party programme.

Mr. Wheatley, whose criticism is referred to above, said a few days later:—

Neither Mr. Maxton, nor he himself, nor any of their friends had the slightest intention of leaving the Labour Party or of splitting the Labour Party ("Manchester Guardian," Oct. 16).

It is a Liberal Party, but Mr. Wheatley and Mr. Maxton are going to remain in it!

The I.L.P. suggested a number of additional Capitalist reforms (family allowances, banks nationalisation, etc.) and failed to get them carried. Having failed in open conference, it adopts the face-saving plea that they may be wangled into the actual election programme. The I.L.P. itself did not suggest that the Labour Party substitute a Socialist programme for its own and is not contemplating leaving the Labour Party. It allows a prominent member of the I.L.P. (H. N. Brailsford) to advocate a Liberal-Labour coalition on the ground that "we of the I.L.P. have failed in our efforts to induce the Labour Party to adopt our programme." ("New Leader," October 12th).

There would, after all, appear to be no reason why Messrs. Wheatley, Maxton, Cook & Co. should strain at a Liberal coalition after swallowing the Labour Party's Liberal programme.

And the reason for the failure of these "Left Wing" Labour M.P.s to act on their words is simple enough. It is candidly stated by Mr. Alfred Slater, Labour M.P. and member of the I.L.P., in a letter to the "New Leader" (October 12th). He says:—

There is not a single constituency in the country where there is a majority of convinced Socialist electors. We have plenty of districts, such as Bermondsey, where there is an overwhelming Labour majority, but it is a sheer delusion to think that the greater number of these people understand what we mean by Socialism. They neither understand it nor want it.

Here we have the rock on which all the reformist parties from Labour to Communist are wrecked. It is this plain brutal fact which nullifies all the fine words of the left wingers and makes all their protests impotent. All of these professed "Socialist" M.P.s (including Dr. Salter) are in the House of Commons under false pretences. None of them—Maxton, Brown, Saklatvala, Wheatley, or any other M.P.—has been elected by Socialists' votes on a Socialist programme. None of them could be so elected now, because there is no constituency in which the majority of voters are Socialist. They can criticise the Labour programme, but they dare not defy the Labour Party machine in the constituencies.

Hence the long list of reforms which is the stock-in-trade of the candidates of the I.L.P., the Communist Party, etc.

The Socialist Party alone has seen that there must be Socialists before there can be Socialism, and acts on it. H.

**OUR FIRST PROSPECTIVE CANDIDATE FOR PARLIAMENT**

At a meeting of the Battersea Branch, Comrade Barker, of the Tooting Branch, was adopted as prospective candidate of the Socialist Party of Great Britain for Battersea.

It now remains for those who desire to see our candidate go to the polls to give practical effect to their wishes by swelling the parliamentary fund to the required dimensions.

As we pointed out originally, our candidates will go to the polls if we are provided with sufficient funds to carry the business through.

**Bethnal Green Lectures**

AT THE

BETHNAL GREEN LIBRARY,

AT 7.30 P.M.

November 12th, COM. GINSBERG on

**"REVOLUTIONARY TACTICS."**

November 26th, COM. FITZGERALD on

**"ANTI-PARLIAMENTARIANISM"**

DOORS OPEN AT 7 O'CLOCK.

Admission Free. Questions and Discussion Invited.

**A Series of Lectures**

BY CAMBERWELL BRANCH,

Trade Council Room, 6a, Artichoke Place, Church Street, Camberwell.

November 2nd, COM. E. LAKE, on

**"WHY WE OPPOSE OTHER POLITICAL PARTIES."**

November 16th, COM. J. GINSBERG, on

**"COMMUNISM."**

November 30th, COM. E. FAIRBROTHER, on

**"SOCIALISM."**

Commencing at 8.30 p.m. Admission Free. Questions and Discussion.

**THE BATTLEGROUND OF THE CLASS STRUGGLE.**

Socialism can only be realised by the success of the working class in its struggle against the owning class. The Socialist movement is built upon the facts of this class struggle. It is useful and necessary therefore to learn what the class struggle really is and the field in which it is carried on.

Labour Party and Capitalist opponents either viciously deny the class struggle or allege that we Socialists make the struggle ourselves by appealing to class hatred and stirring up discontent which should be left to slumber.

Added to these types of opponents we have had those who claimed to be Socialists, but who argue that there is no real class struggle of the workers apart from the Socialists who wage it.

**THE FACTS OF THE CLASS STRUGGLE.**

Classes arise in the historical march of economic evolution. They result from property divisions caused by economic change. The fact that society is made up of owners of various kinds of property and those who practically have no property, naturally leads each section to take action to protect its interests. Owners of wealth inevitably seek to hold on to their possessions and to add to them.

The great body known as the working class, own no wealth as a class, and are compelled to take action to protect their interests as a working and dispossessed group of men and women. The interests of the workers every day is to live as well as they can while employed by the owning class. Naturally the interests of workers and owners clash, because the owners employ the workers to get a profit or surplus out of the work done, and the smaller the proportion given to workers as wages, the more there is left for profits.

Is then the struggle between workers and employers over wages and working conditions the class struggle? Is that the struggle which carries hope of victory for the workers? Is that struggle for better wages and shorter hours, etc., the real fight? Is the workshop, the factory, the mine or strike headquarters, the real final and chief battleground of the class struggle?



**THE ECONOMIC BASIS.**

The workers under the present system must seek masters and obtain the best terms for the sale of their working powers. The whole working life of the working class means that they are engaged in the class struggle, a struggle to uphold the interests of their class in the daily conflict with employers.

It does not depend upon the workers' state of mind, ignorance or alertness. The struggle is bound to exist whether it is recognised or not. The existence of a body of the population with no means of living but that of working for the group of owners—that fact alone denotes a class struggle. The workers cannot take action to seek work and wages without displaying the conflict of interests between them and employers, and the inevitable struggle that is involved in it.

**THE ECONOMIC FIELD.**

The continual struggle about hours and wages seems to some to be petty and ineffectual, and they therefore deny that these daily struggles of trade unionists and other workers are a part of the class struggle. But these never-ceasing battles over details of wages and hours are the actual result of the conflict of interests, and are inseparable from the struggle of the working class to live as wage-slaves in a society which allows them no other way of living as a class.

The field of industry is therefore a battleground of the class struggle, but it is not the only one. Around the question of "the job," and job conditions, the workers are always compelled to struggle, and always will be while there is a working class dependent upon employers for existence. The changes in hours and wages always taking place never destroy the power of the employers over the workers. Through all the variations of hours and wages, there is but, on the average, a subsistence wage for the worker, with a rapid exhaustion of his physical powers. The economic battleground of the class struggle is limited to a guerilla warfare, with no chance of a victory for the working class.

**LIMITATIONS OF ECONOMIC ACTION.**

On the industrial field the power of the workers to fight the employers is small to-day. The workers have practically no

savings, and cannot stop work for long. To withhold their labour-power from the employers is in most cases to simply postpone their surrender.

The workers cannot stop the use of modern wages-saving machinery or speeding-up methods, and neither can they prevent amalgamations and trusts dispensing with large numbers of workers required in competitive trading.

Craft and industrial differences have helped to keep alive a narrow, sectional or trade outlook among the workers, and the industrial field with its job rivalries, does not easily promote a class outlook.

It takes much time for the various branches of workers to realise that the competition and conflict among themselves is itself a result of the position of the working class. The workers do not quickly grasp the fact that they are driven to compete with each other because the economic system of to-day reduces each worker to a seller of merchandise (labour-power) in a market where there are less buyers than sellers.

The limitations of the economic struggle are greater than ever to-day, because the employers are closely organised, and the real control in most industries is in the hands of large combines who dominate the situation. Almost every step in industrial development throws the scale heavily against the workers, who in spite of the long strikes and lock-outs are eventually defeated.

On the industrial field, too, there is the sinister and powerful factor which plays so much havoc with the workers' efforts to fight for better conditions. That factor is the labour leader—Liberal, Labour, Communist, matters not—who, for the sake of his job or to earn the goodwill of the employers—side-tracks the struggles of the worker into blind alleys and to trust in the employers.

**THE POLITICAL FIELD.**

The employing class maintain their supremacy in the struggle because they have control of powers which enable them to defeat the workers. That power is political. How are the great strikes of our time smashed? Not because the employers rely upon economic means, but because they make use of the law and the armed forces at the disposal of the political rulers. Every Emergency Powers Act, Trades Disputes

Act, and Prosecution of Strikers, shows where the real power lies.

Beyond the mere victory in a strike, the employers have the wider and permanent victory of being still in control and possession of the means of production, etc., and that is why they so carefully and strenuously seek to retain control of the political machine.

The real success in the class struggle by the workers can only be secured if they are able to obtain control of the machinery by which the employers at present dominate. That is, if the class struggle is to be waged victoriously by the workers they must win political power, and thus get the machinery in their hands to put an end to Capitalist ownership.

The economic battlefield of the class struggle is one therefore where the workers are bound to continually struggle within Capitalism for a bare existence.

The political battlefield of the class struggle is the only battlefield where the workers can finally win and abolish the struggle altogether by abolishing classes and Capitalism altogether.

Necessary though it is that the workers should struggle on the economic field, the most important battle-ground of the class struggle is on the political field. But they must become conscious of their class interests—they must fight for Socialism.

A. KOHN.

**MANCHESTER BRANCH.****PUBLIC LECTURE**

BY

COMRADE G. McCLATCHIE.

SUBJECT:—

**"The Policy of the Socialist Party."**

ENGINEER'S HALL, RUSHOLME ROAD,  
ALL SAINTS, MANCHESTER,

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 18th, at 7.15 p.m.

FREE. Questions and Discussion Invited.

**SOCIALIST DEFINITIONS:  
A REJOINDER.**

Sir,—In your answer to my objection to the use of the word "services," you adduce two equally inane arguments. First, you ask me, "By what reasoning does he reach this conclusion?" namely, that services are things done. My reply is: not by abstract reasoning, but by the simpler process of reference to several authoritative dictionaries. In the main, the dictionaries define services as things, duties, etc., *performed, done, effected*, the verb always being in the past tense.

Now, Capitalists do not buy anything done from the workers, but their power to do things. This is as true now, in spite of the fact that wages in their money form are not paid in advance, as it was when Marx pointed it out. In simple language the masters say, "You can work a few hours for yourselves if, and only if, you will work more hours for us." Secondly, you say that "the word 'service' . . . will have a meaning depending upon its context and tense." Apart from the fact that "service" is a noun, and therefore has no tense, your admission destroys your own case, since any textbook of logic will inform you that the desideratum of a definition is that, by giving a precise and fixed meaning to every name capable of having such a meaning assigned to it, so that we may know exactly what attributes it connotes and what objects it denotes, it be *unambiguous*. It is by the use of such sloppy, equivocal words as "service" that you build definitions with which bourgeois economists mislead our class. Your definitions 1 and 2 quoted in my previous letter use the word "service," which you admit varies in meaning. Your definitions are therefore loose, equivocal, anti-Marxian.

Your answer to my fourth objection savours of intellectual dishonesty. You said, "Wealth is the product of human activities applied to Nature-given material." I protested that sweat fulfils the conditions of your statement, and in consequence your definition is anti-Communist because it is only half true. That it is produced by labour on natural material is not a sufficient mark of wealth.

Test it with a syllogism:—

The product of human activities on Nature-given material is wealth.



Sweat is a product of human activities on Nature-given material.

Therefore sweat is wealth.

Oh, well-endowed workers!

Similarly, waste, factory-smoke is wealth, which is absurd. You cannot claim a fallacy on the grounds of my putting your definitions backwards because a good definition is affirmative, unconditional and universal, hence cannot suffer by direct conversion. Manifestly your definition is incomplete. It should run, "Some products of human activities on Nature-given materials are wealth, namely, the *useful* products."

I therefore added "useful" to your sentence and turned it into a definition of wealth, thereby correcting an unfortunate blunder of Mr. Fitzgerald's. Marx always stressed the necessity for use-value as a basis of wealth. You remarked, in addition, that my word "useful" begs the question. What question?

Finally, you had recourse to an interesting bit of bourgeois chicanery, known as *argumentum ad ignorantiam*, i.e., you think you prove your definition by showing the impossibility of proving the negative. Conjuring tricks! You ask me: "If wealth is *not* the product of man's activities applied to Nature-given materials, what is it?" I never denied it. My point is that your vague statement is not a definition until you accept the modification "useful product" or something equivalent in meaning.

Your masters love slipshod definitions; it becomes so easy to trip them. An egg is the product of evolution. True enough, but so is an elephant. Half-true statements can put the Socialists in the same category as rat-fleas on the ground that they carry trouble about with them.

If sweat is not wealth, why not?

Your final stab about the difference between "Communist" and "Socialist" is merely silly. You evidently believe that Communism is the policy of the Communist Party of Great Britain, who are as anti-Communist as your definitions were anti-Socialist. Either Mr. Fitzgerald is getting into that doddering stage where incisiveness of argument disappears or else he is afraid of admitting his mistakes. A quicker man than Maxton would have slaughtered his definitions without accepting them.

Yours for Socialism, J. WOLTZ.

#### ANSWER TO WOLTZ.

In our previous reply to Mr. Woltz we gave an illustration of the use of the word "service"—"offered their services"—to show how in a certain context the word meant power to perform given actions. Another instance is when a firm "dispenses with the services" of a number of workers. Mr. Woltz carefully ignored our point and refers to "authoritative dictionaries" to support his view. Wisely, however, he does not mention any particular authority, but prefers to indulge in general terms.

The greatest "authoritative dictionary" in the English language is the "Oxford English Dictionary," and if one consults that work they will find no less than 38 *different* meanings given to the word "service"! In addition, shades and qualifications are given to many of them. These meanings vary both in time and place. Mr. Woltz's "authorities" have let him down badly.

Moreover, when he says "the verb always being in the past tense" he is just indulging in a piece of bounce. In certain instances the verb is given in the future tense in the work referred to above, as when defining feudal service as a duty which a tenant is "to render" to his lord.

Mr. Woltz is hardly happier with the term wealth. He stated that the definition given in the report of the debate was "self-evidently only half true." We asked him to tell us what wealth was, if not the product of the application of human energy to Nature-given material? He now says he never denied it, and then goes on to deny it again by calling it a vague statement.

We said his own definition merely added a word that begged the question. Mr. Woltz now asks "what question?" The question: "Useful to whom or what?" Let us take the word Mr. Woltz thinks so wonderful and crushing—sweat.

In his former letter he said sweat is not wealth because it has no use. A little elementary knowledge of physiology would have saved Mr. Woltz from this absurd blunder. Sweat is necessary for the preservation of health; so much so that in a certain stage of fever its presence or absence will mean life or death to the patient. Moreover, as is well known, many people will pay to be placed under conditions that will induce sweat, as in a Turkish

bath. Sweat therefore is not only useful, but *necessary* to life, and according to Mr. Woltz's own definition, is wealth.

Mr. Woltz's claim that a good definition is "unconditional" is metaphysical nonsense. There is nothing "unconditional" in existence, but probably this is a sample of "Communist" logic. In conclusion, we may state that we are not concerned whether the communism of Mr. Woltz is that of the Communist Party of Great Britain or some particular brand of his own. Our definitions and propaganda are Socialist, and not Communist of any type.

[Ed. Com.]

#### THE ECONOMICS OF THE I.L.P.

There are hosts of well-meaning busy-bodies who set themselves out to educate the workers in Socialist knowledge, whose sole qualification for so doing is an entire absence of such knowledge. As Socialism is not an idea engendered in the brains of men out of nothing, but arises from the present system itself, a Socialist must have an understanding of the present system; particularly he must understand what is capital.

Strictly speaking, capital is money invested in, say, land, buildings, plant, machinery, tools, raw material, *labour power*, for the purpose of returning a surplus; and the only source from which this surplus can come is the unpaid labour of the wage worker. Capital, therefore, is wealth used to exploit wage workers.

A self-styled "Socialist," writing in the "Northern Voice" (September 7th)—a Manchester I.L.P. journal—describes the primitive tools and possessions of savage man as capital. So much for his knowledge. The article is written in praise of Henry George's "Progress and Poverty," and the writer has the impudence to foist the old Capitalist proposal, "Taxation of land values," on his readers as Socialist propaganda, and is apparently very pleased because that staunch supporter of Capitalism, Philip Snowden, "is devoting great efforts and time to the propagation of Henry George's ideas."

An article by "Jonkin" criticises a leading article of the "Daily Dispatch," which apparently represented Socialism as dividing the incomes of the millionaires amongst the poor.

After showing that the editors of

Capitalist newspapers write what they are paid to write and not what they think, "Jonkin" treats us to a sample of what he thinks:—

"If the nation is divided into poor and rich, the poor must for ever remain poor unless there is an alteration made in the distribution of the wealth which is produced. The rich are rich because they get a lot. The poor are poor because they get so little. And no power on this earth can remove the poverty of the many until they receive a larger share of the nation's yearly income."

Dear, dear! The rich are rich because they are rich, and the poor are poor because they are poor, and will remain poor until they get more. So now we know all about it!

The Capitalists are rich because they own the means of wealth production, and consequently the resultant product; and the workers are poor because they possess nothing but their labour-power, which they are compelled to sell to the Capitalists in order to live. As the value of labour-power is determined by the cost of its reproduction, that is to say, the necessary food, clothing and shelter to enable the worker to maintain himself in a fit state to do his job, and reproduce his kind, increases in the wealth produced are of benefit, primarily, to the Capitalist class. The beauty of the article is that while the "Daily Dispatch" attacks Socialism as being a scheme for dividing the incomes of the wealthy amongst the poor, "Jonkin" apparently accepts that definition as being correct. Socialism is nothing of the kind.

In the same issue, Mrs. Bruce Glasier has two columns of sentimental twaddle; there is an article criticising the Tory Government for "muddling," which may be true, but that is the masters' affair, not ours.

The front page article by "Vox," is good as a criticism of the "peace" policy of the T.U.C., but it will not prevent the I.L.P. from supporting these same people at the General Election.

The "Northern Voice" is simply an agent of Capitalism, side-tracking the workers from the only remedy to the ills they suffer, though the writers are probably unaware of the fact.

J. L.



**OFFICIAL NOTICE.**

All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 17, Mount Pleasant, London, W.C.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

**TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTIONS.**

Twelve Months, post free..	..	2s. 6d.
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**The Socialist Standard,**

NOV.



1928

**DO WE WANT A CENSOR?**

The question of censorship has recently been raised here and in Ireland. Discussion in the newspapers has been interesting chiefly as an indication of the confused thought of most of the "advanced" writers. The first case concerns a book—"The Well of Loneliness," written by a woman novelist, Miss Radclyffe Hall. It deals with homosexuality.

Following an attack in the "Daily Express" and "Sunday Express," the publishers offered a curious double defence. One that the book is a very proper book, and two, that they had published it at a high price in order to limit its circulation. They rashly then invited the Home Secretary to pass a "personal" opinion on the book, and promised to abide by his opinion. Sir William Joynson Hicks promptly replied that the book should be withdrawn from circulation, and it was.

One incidental result was a big jump in the price of copies already issued. A Gossip Writer in the "Daily Express" then related how a friend of his had made a few pounds by supplying the increased demand for what his paper denounced as obscene literature.

The book has subsequently been published abroad, and the publishers are contesting the action of the customs authorities in seizing imported copies.

Journalists of many schools of thought

have protested, but none of the protests seen by the present writer has shown any clear understanding of the situation. Most of them have treated it as a dangerous, unnecessary, and narrow-minded abuse of his powers by the Home Secretary. They all proclaim their belief in what they call the "Freedom of the Press," but none of them questions the necessity for a system of suppression.

They all say, in effect, "Yes, we think indecent, pornographic literature should be suppressed, but this book is not indecent. We think it proper for the police to prosecute the publishers of indecent books, but we object to a backstairs censorship by the officials acting under the orders of the Home Secretary." The simple fact is that the case that can be made for the unfettered expression of opinion, is a case for the unfettered expression of "indecent" opinions, the publication of "pornographic" literature and the discussion of any and every subject under the sun. The extension of knowledge has been the result of controversy, of the clash of opinions and interests, both of individuals and classes. But it is not always the desire nor the interest of a ruling class to permit the extension or dissemination of certain knowledge.

Sir William Joynson-Hicks says ("Daily Herald," 16th October) that:—

there must be some limit to the freedom of what a man may write or speak in this great country of ours. That freedom, in my view, must be determined by the question as to whether what is written or spoken makes "one of the least of these little ones to offend."

Here we have Joynson-Hicks lining himself up with all his critics. They also accept the view that certain opinions must not be expressed or discussed. The only difference is that they do not see eye to eye with Joynson-Hicks as to where and how the limit should be fixed.

In Ireland a Censorship Bill is being introduced which will make it illegal to advocate birth control, and which, in addition, will set up a board to deal with any publication which is "against public morality." The board is to consist of five censors nominated by the Government to hear complaints of any kind from recognised associations. If four out of five censors agree to condemn any publication, on any subject whatever, its suppression will follow. In effect this will place the censorship of literature largely in the

hands of the Catholic Truth Society, which has been instrumental in working up public opinion to induce an unwilling Government to introduce the Bill.

The Catholic Truth Society objects to the "Daily Herald," the "Spectator," and several English Sunday Newspapers which circulate in Ireland ("Daily News, 10th" September). The Catholic Truth Society is now demanding that the Board shall have many more members than five, in order to give full representation to the opinion of the country ("Manchester Guardian," 17th October). This holds out really amusing prospects of the Irish authorities suppressing as obscene the journal which denounced Miss Radcliffe Hall's book. If Joynson-Hicks is a bigot, the average Irish Catholic is far more bigotted.

**THE SOCIALIST VIEW.**

The Socialist Party of Great Britain is unique in keeping open platform for the expression of the point of view of opponents.

We oppose all forms of suppression, not in response to some abstract principle, but because we recognise that Socialist Society demands for its operation, as for its achievement, a responsible, intelligent population, used to drawing its own conclusions from the observation of facts and the weighing up of the arguments of opposing schools of thought. We only know our position to be correct because it survives continuous criticism. We do not deny that suppression may be immediately useful to the British or the Irish governing class. We do deny that it can serve the purpose of the Socialist movement.

On broader grounds we challenge the usefulness of suppressing such books as that of Miss Radclyffe Hall. Inability to visualize any problem except in its relation to their own class interests and class prejudices is the failing of ruling classes in general. They "solve" the problem of street games by punishing the youthful offenders (or their parents), instead of providing playing fields. They jail starving men who beg or steal, instead of providing them with food. They impose severe penalties for the drinking of alcohol, or the selling of it within certain hours, instead of finding out the causes (over-fatigue, malnutrition, etc.), which induce people to seek stimulants. They try to stop sexual perversions by prohibiting the discussion of the numerous accurate and

inaccurate ideas on the subject instead of encouraging the search for specific causes. Their combination of class and religious prejudice prevents them from even examining the question from the rational standpoint which suggest that it is a problem of physical ill-health, or sex-starvation, or both.

The censorship of books like the "Well of Loneliness" is no more a remedy than the prohibition of unemployed demonstrations would be a solution of the problem of unemployment.

**WAS CAPITALISM A MISTAKE?**

To the Editor, SOCIALIST STANDARD.  
Forest Gate, London.

Sir,—As a working-class mother and a student of sociology, I certainly think that "for thousands of years the human race has been straying from the correct path of development, and that the whole of human history, since the breakdown of the earliest tribal communism and equality has been a ghastly and avoidable mistake." Thank you for putting the case against the Coercive State in such a small literary compass. The development of the "castes" you mention—"military," "priestly," etc., was a "mistake" and a "crime" and an "act of tyranny." Thank you again for the phrasing.

Whoever would have thought that the SOCIALIST STANDARD could constitute itself an apologist for the "class" or professional governments kept in power by a combination of cruelty and a gross misinterpretation of the facts of human existence in particular and the cosmos in general, the fatal opiate of "post-mortem happiness" stifling the spirit in its struggle for happy existence. Well, well, all this agony of human existence (over and over again described by the Socialists) for what? In order that "Industry" might develop along certain lines, and—what lines?

Mass production and yet more mass production of what is for the most part rubbish. "Production" that disintegrates the human mind, devitalises the human body, degrades the primary human relationships and eliminates the primary joys. Industry must be made to fit man, not man to fit Industry. The truth of this era of perverted industry is that human kind has been temporarily:



diseased through the disorder caused by the loss of social balance. In short, by this outrage of class or parasitic Government. For, unless every unit of a body is "doing its bit" in the matter of government, it becomes unbalanced, disordered and diseased.

No, the soldier with his Church, and later the moneylender with his more numerous institutions—factories, hospitals, press and schools—have been neither inevitable nor necessary to the development of Life. The state of life itself during this historical aberration of industry is sufficient condemnation. The natural driving force has been, and must be, the production of life. Life for Life's sake is the religion of the universe, and industry, one of its activities, unless directed to this major end, no longer produces wealth—a state of well-being—but merely property. It is too late to preach the doctrine of inevitability in the matter of suffering, and necessity in relation to coercion and governmental usurpation.

The conviction that life should be enjoyed and not merely endured, has now too strong a hold on the modern mind for the politician to succeed where the priest has failed in deceiving the people with a doctrine that is the veritable prostitution of philosophy. Government and Industry could, and should have been, on quite different lines. Determinism in these activities is as false to eventual reality as it is in others.

"LIFE."

#### OUR REPLY.

Our correspondent says that the whole of social development "since the breakdown of the earliest tribal communism" has been an "avoidable mistake."

It is therefore for her to explain why human society made the mistake and how it could have been avoided. She explains the original "mistake" by saying that "human kind has been temporarily diseased through the disorder caused by the loss of balance." This "explanation" in fact explains nothing.

If society was then on the correct path, how did it come to lose its balance? At different periods different human communities have decided to have military caste in preference to having every man a jack-of-all-trades, including that of soldier. Our correspondent denounces this, but gives no

evidence that this division of labour was in fact a disadvantage. She goes on to say that society is unbalanced "unless every unit of a body is doing its bit." On what ground does she dispute the claim of the soldier to be doing his bit when the tribe needed military protection? Similarly with other such divisions of labour.

She denies that factories, hospitals, press and schools have been necessary to the development of life, and goes on to use a slogan, "Life for Life's sake." She avoids, however, explaining what she means by "life" in this connection. If she means merely the quantity of human beings alive, it is certainly to the point to observe that the pressure of population on the means of subsistence under primitive conditions was a cause of war and of the development of a military caste.

If she means what is, for want of a better term, called the "quality of life," she appears to be committing herself to the view that life without any of the inventions and discoveries of machines, processes and methods of industrial organisation, is better than the life of the savage without the aid of this accumulated power over natural forces.

In conclusion, our correspondent should notice that the original article did not in the least propound the view that everything that has existed and does exist is inevitable and must be endured. On the contrary, the Socialist Party continually insists that the abolition of Capitalism in industrially developed countries, and its replacement by Socialism requires the conscious and deliberate action of the organised workers and can come in no other way.

H.

### EDMONTON.

## A LECTURE

AT

EDMONTON TOWN HALL,

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9th, at 8 p.m.

Speaker - COM. J. GINSBERG.

Admission Free. Doors open 7.30 p.m.

### A TALK TO WIVES & MOTHERS.

A CRITICISM AND A REPLY.

To the Editor, SOCIALIST STANDARD.

Dear Sir,

We women are always being taught by the SOCIALIST STANDARD that the mistake made by all other parties except the Socialist Party was to evolve a scheme first in which all the evils of Capitalism were omitted and then to attempt to carry it out by the power of the vote. I refer to those schemes made without regard to the trends of social development. You call it Utopian, when systems of collectivism, collective eating, collective working, collective playing, etc., are worked out in the minds of men and then, because they seem "good" as opposed to the "bad" system of Capitalism are advocated as practical politics by those men.

You tell us that the Socialist believes that the normal development of Capitalism will provide the institutions which will be used by people after the revolution in the material basis of society has been brought about. As an example, it is explained that the growth of the Modern Credit System will produce the very means whereby centralised administration in the field of production will be carried on under Socialism—possibly.

It is surprising, then, to hear Mrs. Gilmac advocating the idea of collective cooking and eating as a reason for adopting Socialism. Surely she knows, as every other woman knows, whether among the "wives and mothers," or among those women who are neither wives nor mothers, that "feeding the brute" is one of the pleasures of love. Woman is built for feeding; she does so continuously from the day she places a baby to her breast to the day she packs a man's lunch-basket. When a woman marries the man she loves, some of that maternal attitude enters into her outlook upon him.

The future modification of family life does not imply that under Socialism we shall turn back to barbaric tribal groups with their ritual of collective cooking and eating. It seems more probable that under Socialism the family will be, though different from the modern family, essentially similar in that it will form on the basis of the mutual love of a woman and a man.

This follows because Socialism is the

child of Capitalism and hence somewhat like its mother, because though a revolution means a radical change in the basis of society, it only occurs because, while the method of production is in one stage the other material factors in society evolve step by step until the disharmony between the foundation of society and its roof produces a collapse.

The family seems to evolve gradually; it is not fundamental, like private ownership of tools, etc. There is, therefore, no reason to suppose that communal cooking or communal eating will be any more practicable or desirable than it is to-day. To-day we occasionally go to a restaurant for a change from drab surroundings. It will not be necessary to escape from such surroundings under Socialism.

Mrs. Gilmac knows that it is not possible at restaurants to get always what one might want.

My husband likes his food cooked in a particular way sometimes, and it is generally a way which no restaurant could readily provide. Surely there must be thousands like him? Does Socialism entail the abolition of private home life? Mrs. Gilmac could not have been thinking of many things when she said that we "prefer to enjoy ourselves collectively," because that is absurd. To me and to millions of women, communal cooking is undesirable. We should be more pleased to know that our houses were to be made hygienic, with healthy windows, no corners nor dirt-collecting niches, and adequately supplied with electric cooking and cleaning apparatus, than to know that we could go to a place where it was all done for us. The trouble about feeding is that one cannot feed oneself sufficiently in three days to last three months. The best methods of collective industry may not apply to cooking, therefore.

I do not suggest that there will be no communal festivity under Socialism, my point is that systematising of any kind as regards the untouched future is rash and unscientific, since what will and will not be practicable is a question which can only be solved in its own time.

However, we are justified in provisionally prophesying the future on the grounds of present trends. And on those grounds I think that Socialism will leave us the family without the slavery conditions that make it



unhappy, it will leave us women the pleasure of feeding those whom we love without the drudgery of cooking and serving in the environment of smutty fires, greasy ovens, dirty walls and stinking air.

The reason for working women to accept Socialism to-day is not for the sake of a possible communal cookery centre in the future, but to make a scientific fight against what is hurting us now.

To plead for posterity is sentimental and consistent with womanly feelings, but it is not Socialism.

We owe nothing to posterity. It is of ourselves we must think.

Nevertheless, it is nice to know that the "S.S." is devoting some of its valuable pages to the women.

Yours truly,  
MRS. BETTS.

#### THE REPLY.

The trend of social development is towards having meals away from home and the breaking up of the old-fashioned hearth generally. Therefore my suggestions were not Utopian, but quite in keeping with present tendencies, and were an appeal to the housewife to hasten the day when she would be able to take full advantage of freeing herself from her round of unnecessary toil.

The mistake some make is to endeavour to carry out Utopian schemes that are contrary to the advantages made possible through Capitalism.

For example, we do not call it Utopian to improve on the partly existing schemes of collective activity. Utopian refers to ideas out of touch with reality.

The method of cooking and distributing food in vogue when Socialism replaces Capitalism may be much more centralised than we, at present, can imagine, just as the present manner of producing and delivering food differs from that of a hundred years ago. This is shown by the selection of prepared foods now in common use. It is no longer "natural" to bake our own bread when it is so easily obtainable from the bakery, and so with many other things which at one time seemed "natural" for the housewife to do.

The "natural" pleasure of love, that of "feeding the brute," ceases with the ceasing of putting a baby to the breast. The rest is a matter of circumstance.

Surely the majority of women, if they were economically free would prefer to dine out with "him" than spend much unnecessary time preparing meals, etc.,—if they think about it at all? Just as she wishes for relief from the "natural" duties connected with the constant attention to children.

Why it is supposed to be "natural" for every woman to prefer home duties any more than for every man to be an engineer rather puzzles me.

We are so steeped in tradition that we imagine that what is the outcome of woman's bondage or man's economic condition is a natural function.

As to collective action, if to eat and cook collectively is bad because it was done during barbarism, then surely it is also barbaric to eat at all. Why eat? Why eat in restaurants? All relics of barbarism are not worse than the present habits.

The future form of family life may be somewhat like its present Capitalist form. Unions of short duration are becoming general, as is shown by the divorce courts, etc. Another instance of economic conditions where free love is only for those who can afford it. The mutual love of a man and a woman, even freed from the present economic dependence, may not last for a lifetime.

The remarks about the family not being fundamental like private ownership are not at all clear. What do they mean? What is fundamental? Is not the family?

The family evolves along with economic conditions, and is now, in many respects, different from the family of old, as is instanced by the growing tendency to dine out, to travel, etc., to develop industrially. Woman's position since the War started has shown that *what was, need not always be*. If she is wise she will endeavour to take steps to free herself of unnecessary drudgery instead of imagining that it is natural for her to be cooped up in solitude; a thousand mothers cooking in a thousand rooms, and washing thousands of saucepans. As to our critic's husband, I hardly know whether to take these remarks seriously. If he cannot get his particular dish at present-day restaurants, perhaps under a more sane system of society he may have more leisure to wait for its preparation, unless it is so appetising that others will also require it and it will always be at

hand and involve much less labour if done collectively.

But joking aside—of course, if women prefer to spend so much time preparing food, etc., and all that it involves (and may involve even under Socialism), she would no doubt be allowed to do it all herself. But I was suggesting the possibility of collective cooking and distribution of food as being in harmony with *collective production* generally, with a view to reducing all work where possible and leave both sexes more leisure.

Under such conditions a woman may be able to develop other talents she may possess to further advantage, whether it is a "masculine" or "feminine" occupation.

"Does Socialism entail the abolition of private home life?" our critic asks. Personally I hope so, the present sort, anyway, since to me, and to many others, it is *too* private for the woman.

I happen to be, like most of us, a social being, and would as well dine out as stay at home preparing meals and thereby losing the opportunity of social intercourse, of travel, concerts, etc., etc., although I am prepared to do my quota of work while others prepare my food, or *vice versa*. This need not necessarily mean giving up *private* home life, but will enable us to make it a matter of choice instead of necessity.

Public restaurants are very much taking woman's "natural" job out of her hands already, and she has not risen up in arms against it, and it is not "natural" for the "elite" to cook their husbands' dinners, which seems to suggest this cooking, etc., is an economic problem. Does it not?

My critic, having made definite remarks about the future mode of family life, etc., has herself seen that to do so is rash and unscientific.

However, if I may prophesy provisionally, I can do so on the basis of present trends—i.e., as I said before, not home-made bread, etc., but collective cooking and collective dining, perhaps.

Collective schooling—board and otherwise, are already the thing, so why not collective nurseries, laundries, etc?

The reason for women to adopt the principles of Socialism is to get the best the community can offer, so that if a few can prepare meals for the many while the latter are doing other work, then communal cooking may be part of the scientific scheme.

The remarks about posterity, etc., are strange, coming from one so concerned about family life. To plead for posterity is to endeavour to improve the lot of our descendants, which is in accordance with human instinct. Sentiment in the sense of feeling is a part of our general make-up, masculine as well. Were it not so we would scarcely put up with the struggle so complacently, but would "let our children," to quote Heine, "go beg for bread." But do we?

(MRS.) H. GILMAC.

#### "MODERNISM" v MATERIALISM, OR THE SKY PILOTS AND THE CREW.

In our pamphlet "Socialism and Religion" (p. 23) we make the claim that, "In contrast with science, . . . religion decreases in volume, cohesion and definiteness." Evidence in support of this view was amply provided at the recent Church Congress at Cheltenham, and it is significant that whereas the Capitalist Press treated the confabulations of the British Association with deferential respect, the outpourings of the Episcopalian "soul" met with somewhat critical, if not impatient, patronage.

The differences between the Anglo-Catholics and the Evangelicals, serious enough in themselves, paled into insignificance beside the virulent attack upon the "Modernists" by the English Church Union; which prompts the reflection that it is only a few hundred years ago since respectable pillars of society such as Dean Inge and the Bishop of Birmingham would have been burned at the stake by their Christian brethren.

#### WHAT IS MODERNISM?

Canon B. H. Streeter, one of its champions, states that "Modernists are a group of persons who look round on a civilisation that is likely to perish for lack of a religion, and wish to offer it a religion that is intellectually a possible one."

Compulsory education has created a position in regard to religion which is really new. In all ages among the educated few a certain amount of sceptical rationalism has flourished; but heretofore the mass of the uneducated has always taken for granted the existence of a God or gods, and therefore the necessity for some kind of religious observance. The new thing in the modern situation is the spread of the spirit of



criticism and enquiry . . . to the masses of the people. . . . In their minds Christianity is associated with a political and economic status quo, which many view with hostility, and few with more than tolerance. It is the religion professed by classes with whom they are in constant economic conflict.

Thus the Modernist appears to be sufficient of a materialist to recognise the existence of the class struggle and that the fate of religion is bound up therewith. Canon Streeter, however, concludes as follows:—

What I wish to insist is that under modern conditions, if the Church desires to speak to the world with the voice of authority, it must first compel outsiders to recognise that there is within the Church a body of investigators who are in no way bound to defend established positions, but are free to follow truth ("The Church of England Newspaper," p. 18, 5/10/28).

Just how far the Modernists are prepared to follow truth may be gathered from the speeches of the prelates above referred to. Bishop Barnes is convinced, not only that "Darwin conclusively demonstrated man's similarity with the rest of creation," but that "all the higher faculties of man had their beginnings in lower forms of life."

We cannot, he says, separate mind and body; they are two aspects of a single unity. How then, it may be asked, can we continue to believe in the existence of human personality after bodily death? I would answer that our belief . . . is bound up with our conception of the nature of God. . . . We cannot believe that he will allow anything of value to be destroyed. . . . How man's personality will be preserved we cannot say.

If the right reverend gentleman had stopped here we could forgive many Christians for losing their tempers with him. Few materialists have put matters more bluntly. Even Marx and Engels, summarising Hobbes in "The Holy Family," could only say, "It is impossible to separate thought from matter that thinks. . . . We cannot know anything about the existence of God." (Quoted by Engels in his Introduction to "Socialism: Utopian and Scientific.") But the Bishop is merciless.

He proceeds:—

A generation ago it was customary to say that Heaven was a state and not a place, the implication being that the life after death was temporal but not spatial. Einstein has, however, demonstrated that space and time form a single complex which we break up, arbitrarily, in our thought. We have no right to postulate that in the world to come part of this complex will be destroyed while the other part remains intact. In fact, with regard to time and space in the Kingdom of Heaven very much the same difficulties arise as with regard to body and person-

ality. In neither case can natural science give effective guidance ("Church of England Newspaper," p. 12, 5/10/28).

Comically enough, the Bishop's partner in crime, Dean Inge, tries to use this same demonstration of Einstein's as a proof of the "uncertainty" of science. He refers to "old pre-suppositions of scientific thought, which have been almost unchallenged since Newton and Descartes, are being assailed from all sides." Yet, nearly forty years ago, Engels pointed out in the above quoted preface that Kant and Laplace had superseded Newton's "eternal system" by an evolutionary conception, which Darwin supplemented in biology, thus exploding Descartes as Bishop Barnes shows.

The Dean also comes to grief over his generalisations upon Evolution, which he assures us "cannot have created our awareness of itself." Yet, as his colleague, already quoted, points out, the highest faculties of man have evolved, and it is by these faculties that the idea of evolution is framed.

Again, he tells us that "God can in no sense be a product of Evolution," yet further on admits that "Religion itself no doubt is evolving with those who possess it." Neither Dean nor Bishop endeavour to offer any objective evidence of the existence of God. They are too consistent to their scientific education for that.

The individual mind, like the individual body, dissolves at death. For it, so far as we know, "absolute" and "relative" alike lose interest, but the world goes on. That which does not change is the process of change.

The Dean concludes "that Evolution is only the method by which the Eternal God carries out most of His purposes in the world. . . . I do not think that the existence or attributes of God are involved in it at all."

Such a profound philosopher should have recognised long ago that every particular attribute is finite and implies its opposite, as whiteness is opposed to and excludes blackness, goodness badness, and so forth. All our knowledge is based upon the evidence of our senses; in other words, our minds are inseparable from organic bodies in a material world. An unchecked or disordered imagination can evolve all manner of fantasies which do not correspond with external reality. They may be real enough

to those who indulge in them or are their victims. They may lead to actions, but the devotional observances of the Christian are no more proof of the object of his faith than the similar observances of the pagan and the savage before him.

The dipsomaniac who sees variegated livestock on the walls has just as much evidence of the soundness of his convictions as the religious fanatic. The important difference lies in the social character of religion. In its primitive form it expressed man's desire to control his environment by efforts of his imagination, and its evolution is explicable only by the evolution of the environment.

This evolution has harnessed man's mind to the task of production. Instead of trying to rule Nature by magic, mankind has learnt to utilise Nature's own forces. Scope for the imagination has been found in the realm of invention, and as fast as man follows this line of action he forsakes the dead ritual of the past.

By changing his surroundings man has changed himself. The superstitious savage has gone. In his place stands the scientific worker.

The process, however, is far from complete. As yet, science has grasped only the technical side of social life.

The organisation of society itself on rational lines awaits the social revolution, i.e., the disarmament and dispossession of the Capitalist ruling class. It is in the interests of this class that the Church exists. Belief in God and respect for ruling-class "authority" go hand in hand.

The revolutionary workers have no use for a creed which is the mere ghost of past social life. They require a clear outlook, free from superstition of every kind, from the crude and gross to the elaborate and refined. Hence the subtleties of modernist parsons fail to lure us back to the fold. "God's in His Heaven?" All right! Let Him stop there! We want the world for the workers. E. B.

**YOUR** newsagent can obtain the "Socialist Standard" through the wholesalers, W. H. Smith & Son. Ask him to get your copy, but if you have any difficulty send direct to 17, Mount Pleasant, London, W.C.1.

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Mr. H. Baker (Wickford, Essex) writes—objecting to the statement that there will be a period of transition after a Socialist working class have gained control of the machinery of government. He says that "the moment Capitalism is abolished Socialism will start." He forgets, however, that economic re-organisation is not a task to be completed in a moment by the simple issue of a decree, even although the majority of the population support the re-organisation. You cannot in a moment convert industries from the production of luxuries for the leisured few to the production of necessities for the population as a whole.

Mr. Baker adds that the change-over will involve "as little fuss" as a general election. This, of course, depends largely upon the attitude of a dissentient minority. But whether there is fuss or not, there certainly will be very difficult economic problems requiring to be solved before society will be running smoothly on a Socialist basis.

Mr. Baker also states that a Plebs League speaker at Southend asserted that Socialism has been established in Russia. The statement is totally untrue, and the Bolsheviks in Russia do not now make any such claim. We have repeatedly invited those here who ignorantly repeat this statement to produce their evidence, which they are, of course, unable to do. The Russian working class do not "own and control the factories and run them for their own benefit." The Russian workers are wage-earners, like the workers here. Rent, interest and profit are, in Russia as here, paid to home and foreign Capitalist investors. [Ed. Com.]

## S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS

### LONDON DISTRICT.

<b>Sundays</b>	Clapham Common, 3 p.m. Tottenham, West Green Corner, 11.30 a.m. Tooting, Garrett Lane, Tooting Broadway, 7.30 p.m. Victoria Park, 4 p.m. Woolwich, Beresford Square, 7.30 p.m. Hyde Park, 11.30 p.m. Paddington, Prince of Wales, 8 p.m.
<b>Mondays</b>	Clerkenwell, Garnault Place, 8 p.m. Camberwell, Wren Road, 8 p.m.
<b>Wednesdays</b>	Hackney, Paragon Road and Mare Street, 8 p.m. Paddington, Prince of Wales, 8 p.m.
<b>Thursdays</b>	Becontree, Rodney Street, Ilford, 8 p.m.
<b>Fridays</b>	Clerkenwell, Acton St., Grays Inn Rd., 8 p.m.
<b>Saturdays</b>	West Ham, Water Lane, 8 p.m. Wood Green, Jolly Butchers Hill, 8 p.m. Leyton, Corner Grange Park, 7.30 p.m.
<b>Sundays</b>	<b>HANLEY BRANCH.</b> Hanley Market Square, 7 p.m. Burslem, St. John Square, 7 p.m.



## BRANCH DIRECTORY.

- BATTERSEA.**—Sec., 2, Hanbury-road, S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns-road. Discussion second Thurs. in month.
- BECONTREE.**—Sec., Hy. Gratton, 4, Drummond Ave., Brooklands, Romford. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 7.30, at above address.
- BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec. E. Jesper, 86, Rollason-rd., Erdington. Branch meets The Continental Café, Moor St., 1st and 3rd Sundays at 11 a.m.
- CAMBERWELL.**—Branch meets at Camberwell Trades Council Room, 6A, Artichoke Place, Camberwell Green, every Friday at 8.30 p.m. Discussions—public invited. Letters to Secretary at above address.
- CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.
- CLERKENWELL.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at 17, Mount Pleasant, W.C.1. Discussions first Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.—all invited. Sec., at above address.
- EAST LONDON.**—Sec., D. Jacobs, 28, Lyl Road, Bow, E.8.
- GLASGOW.**—Sec. W. Falconer, 128, Bluevale Street. Branch meets every Thursday, 7.30 p.m., Unitarian Church Hall, Ross Street, Glasgow. Public invited. Discussions.
- HACKNEY.**—Branch meets The Old Gravel Pit Hall, Mare-street, Hackney, Mondays, 8 p.m., Discussions 9.30. Communication to Sec. as above.
- HANLEY.**—Branch meets Tuesdays, Working Men's Club, Glass-st. Sec., F. Goldstraw, 38, Paddock Street, Hanley.
- ISLINGTON.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 144, Seven Sister-rd., Holloway, N. Sec., M. Baker, 18, Orpingley-rd., N.7.
- LEYTON.**—Sec., A. Holland, 396, Lea Bridge-rd., Leyton. Branch meets 8 p.m., Trades and Labour Hall, Grove House, High-rd., every Monday. Public invited.
- MANCHESTER.**—Sec., W. Addison, 111, West Park-street, Salford, Manchester.—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month, 7.45 p.m. at 114, Duke St., Stretford-road.
- PADDINGTON.**—Branch meeting held on 2nd and 4th Fridays, 8 p.m., in room above the Co-operative Stores, 206, Kilburn-lane, W.9 (side door).
- SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Sec., J. Bird, 5 Wellington-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.
- TOOTING.**—Sec., 15, University-road, Collier's Wood, S.W. 19. Branch meets every Friday at 8 p.m. at Tooting Adult School, 971, Garratt-lane, S.W. 17.
- TOTTENHAM.**—Secretary, 18, Woodlands Park Rd., N.15. Branch meets Fridays, Room 2, Trades Hall, 7, Bruce Grove. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.
- WALTHAMSTOW.**—Sec., S. E. Williams, 3, Dyson-rd., Leytonstone, E.11. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.
- WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107 Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at Secretary's address.

- WEST HAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford rd., Stratford. Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.
- WOOD GREEN.**—All communications to Sec., F. W. Godfrey, 71, Falkland Road, N.8.
- WOOLWICH.**—Branch meets at 94, Griffin Road, Plumstead. Communications to Secretary at above address.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interests of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great HOLDS— Britain

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



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## TROTSKY STATES HIS CASE.

(The Real Situation in Russia, by Leon Trotsky. Translated by Max Eastman. 364 pages. 7s. 6d. George Allen & Unwin.)

This book consists for the most part of the statement submitted by Trotsky (and 12 other minority members) to the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party in September, 1927. The document was suppressed by Stalin and his supporters, and the opposition group—both in the Central Committee and in the country at large—was broken up by the imprisonment, persecution and exile of its prominent members. As might have been expected a copy of the statement was smuggled out of Russia, and now appears in an English edition. It is translated by Max Eastman, who is an American admirer of Trotsky, and was himself recently in Russia.

Trotsky describes in considerable detail the serious problems which face the workers in Russia under Stalin's Government, the charges which his group level at the dominant section in the Communist Party, and the remedies which they propose.

The richer peasants in the country, and the trading and money lending capitalists in the towns are increasing in wealth and are becoming a more powerful factor politically. One-fifth of all trade, 50 per cent. of retail trade and more than 20 per cent. of industrial production is in private hands (page 27). The profits of the trading capitalists, the middle men, are big and growing while the workers' share in the national income has been falling since 1925. The introduction of methods of rationalisation into State industry results in an increase of unemployment, a general intensification of labour, and a lowered standard of living.

The fear of unemployment is such that the workers resist the efforts of the Government to increase production in the factories by machinery and more efficient methods.

Among the 3½ million rural wage workers the rates of pay are often below the legal minimum even on the Soviet State farms. Housing for the town workers grows steadily worse.

Workers' control is more than ever a mere catch-word without real application. "Never before have the trade unions and the working mass stood so far from the management of the Socialist industry as now" (page 57).

The immense majority of delegates to Trade Union Conferences are people entirely dissociated from actual participation in industry. Factory committees are mistrusted and discontent is driven underground because the man who voices a complaint knows that he will lose his job. Men and women are not equally paid.

### CAPITALISM ON THE LAND.

During the previous four years Trotsky alleges that from 35 per cent. to 45 per cent. of the landless rural workers and small peasants were unable to continue making a living, while the rich class of peasants (more than 28 acres) increased in number by from 150 per cent. to 200 per cent. (p. 64). In a typical district 15 per cent. of the peasants own 50 per cent. of the land machinery, cattle, etc. Renting of land is on the increase, and the army of landless rural labourers is continually being recruited from the poor peasantry.

### THE NEW BUREAUCRACY.

Under Bolshevik administration there has grown up a new bureaucracy, divorced from working class life and not subject to



any effective control from below. "The city Soviets have been losing in these recent years all real significance." "The Soviets are having continually less and less to do with the decision of fundamental, political, economic, and cultural questions. They are becoming mere supplements to the executive committees and the praesidia. . . . The discussion of problems at the full meeting of the Soviets is a mere show discussion" (pages 98 and 99). Elected delegates are promptly removed from office if they express on behalf of the workers any criticism of the official element.

The composition of the Communist Party is deteriorating. At the beginning of 1927 only one-third of the members were shop and factory workers, while two-thirds were peasants, officials, etc. In 18 months over 100,000 industrial workers were lost to membership and an equal number of peasants admitted. The majority of these were "middle" peasants, the percentage of farm labourers being insignificant.

Inside the Communist Party "the genuine election of officials is in actual practice dying out" (page 115). Terms of office are being increased to two or more years. The Party machinery is used to secure the dismissal from their employment of workers who criticise the leadership.

#### COMMUNIST PARTY GROUPINGS.

There are, in Trotsky's analysis, three main groups. First, a right wing group, which combines the aims of the middle peasants with those of the Trade Union leaders and the better paid clerical and other workers. Secondly, there is the ruling section of the Communist Party, the members of the Government and the administration. Their object is to avoid if possible any change in the present balance of forces such as will disturb their own position.

And, thirdly, there is the Trotsky group, which claims to represent the mass of the industrial workers.

#### LENIN WORSHIP.

Quite a large part of the book is given up to the personal issues between Trotsky and the members of the Government. Each section and all of the individual disputants try desperately hard to prove not only that their views are in accord with Lenin's general line of policy, but that during his lifetime they possessed Lenin's personal regard. These personal issues may be of interest to the English reader, but are not of great im-

portance. They are, however, significant in that they indicate what both Stalin's group and Trotsky's group think of the degree of understanding possessed by the members of the Communist Party in Russia. Whatever may be the real opinion of Stalin and Trotsky as to the value of this "Lenin worship" and controversies about personal merits (it is noteworthy that Trotsky specifically credits Stalin's faction with "sincerity," p. 185), they both plainly realise that in the life and death struggle which involves the political careers and the very existence of the oppositionists, they have got to canvass support by "arguments" based on abuse and on the kind of trivialities which are the stock in trade of every demagogue appealing to a politically ignorant electorate. This, more than Trotsky's assertions, indicates the low level which rules among the so-called Communists in Russia. It is not, therefore, surprising to be told that the majority organise regular bands of "Communists" to break up opposition meetings by means of catcalls and whistling in chorus.

#### TROTSKY'S PROGRAMME.

The reader will have noticed that the evils which afflict the Russian worker are very much the same as those which afflict us here or in any other country where the basis of the economic system is capitalism.

Trotsky presents a long list of remedies which serve only to confirm what we have always said as to the necessity for Russia to go through capitalism. Trotsky does not admit this in so many words. In fact, he vigorously denounces Stalin's "capitalist tendencies." But when we examine his programme we find that it is all based implicitly on the continuance of capitalism in Russia until such time as a developed capitalist industry and a Socialist revolution outside Russia make Socialism possible.

Most of his proposals might have been lifted out of the programme of any trade union in Germany or England; "Equal pay for equal work," less overtime; more unemployment pay; no more Government faking of labour and industrial statistics; retail prices to be brought down to the world price level; no profiteering by capitalist middlemen; no increase in the rents of working class houses; every effort to be made to lower the cost of production in order to promote the growth of industry; more taxes on rich peasants; abolition of

the State sale of Vodka, etc. A long programme of reforms, but no mention of the abolition of capitalist farming, capitalist trading and capitalist investment. Both Trotsky and Stalin draw up their programmes within the framework of state and private capitalism which prevails in Russia.

By far the most important demand made by Trotsky is for the unfettered expression of opinion by members of the Communist Party, and this does not go far enough. In the past Trotsky, Stalin and Lenin all agreed that "democracy" was merely a capitalist trick for hoodwinking the workers. With their dictatorship of a minority they were going to suppress the defenders of capitalism and impose Socialism on the apathetic majority. Experience has now taught Trotsky that dictatorship is incompatible with sound working class organisation.

It is also still necessary for him and other Bolsheviks to learn that they have not found a substitute for democracy. Without in any way idealising it, the fact remains that modern industrial society, whether on a capitalist or on a Socialist basis, cannot be run with any degree of smoothness and efficiency without democratic methods. In no other way can the necessary social stability and the indispensable minimum of general interest in administration be secured.

Sooner or later the whole apparatus for suppressing opinion and political propaganda and organisation in Russia will have to be scrapped. The attempt to stifle criticism and hostile propaganda does not hasten the end of capitalism; it may for a time drive the propaganda underground, but the effect of that is to produce a false sense of security and a rapid deterioration among the organised workers themselves.

#### TROTSKY'S ERRORS ABOUT ENGLAND.

One fatal weakness of the Bolshevik leaders 10 years ago was their appalling misunderstanding of conditions outside Russia. There was at that time much excuse. Now there is none; but the ignorance remains. In face of the plain evidence of every election and the absurdly small membership of the English Communist Party, despite the waste of hundreds of thousands of pounds on propaganda, Trotsky still bases his hopes on an early revolution in this country. With 85 per cent. of the electorate members of the working class, there is no single

constituency where a candidate has yet been returned to Parliament on a Socialist programme. The great majority of the workers still pin their faith to capitalism, a majority of them even continue to vote for the Liberal and Tory parties. To suppose that workers who vote for capitalism will at a signal from Moscow rise in revolt against the Government for which they vote, either in peace time or war time is sheer delusion. If Trotsky or anyone else bases a programme on that fantastic supposition they are in for certain disappointment.

Trotsky deals also with the complete failure of the Third International in China, and lays the blame on their tactic of supporting one after another of the capitalist nationalist leaders.

The book as a whole is valuable as a first-hand and authoritative impression of the recent condition of Russia, although of course we cannot accept Trotsky's facts or his conclusions without further independent evidence, and this is not available. It is absolutely certain that the means do not exist in Russia for obtaining statistics on prices, production, etc., on a sufficiently general and precise basis to warrant the use made of them by both Trotsky and his opponents, and if Trotsky is as prone to rashness in drawing conclusions about Russian affairs as he is about England, then his views must be treated with considerable caution.

Nevertheless we can confidently assert that Stalin's group is in the wrong. Not Trotsky's book, but its treatment by the Russian Government proves this to be the case. Competent, self-reliant Socialists are not produced in an atmosphere of censorship, and Socialism is not to be promoted by the violent suppression of critics and criticism. Party unity which is based on the avoidance of discussion, is a fictitious unity, and a membership which is recruited by the bait of jobs in the State factories is worse than useless. Trotsky's exile is the Russian Government's plea of guilty to the charge of hindering the spread of Socialist knowledge and the growth of the Socialist movement. His exile does not prove Trotsky to be in the right, but it does prove his opponents to be in the wrong.

H.

Contributions are earnestly invited to assist us with the expense of publishing more literature.



## THE RICH MAN'S BURDEN.

### A DEFENCE OF MAMMON.

Papa Smith must feel proud of his daughter! But these Smiths have always been a versatile and talented breed. The Earl of Birkenhead, K.C., P.C., F.C.B.\* (affectionately dubbed Fat Fee Smith), erstwhile Galloper-in-Chief Extraordinary to the Ulster Invincibles, former occupant of the Woolsack, late H.M. Secretary of State for India, now forensic, literary, chemical, diamond and golden-syrup expert (with "glittering prizes" complete), all this and more; nevertheless, he must look to his laurels—he has a daughter! Lady Eleanor beyond doubt has inherited her father's well-known intellectual and amiable qualities. Whether roaming the Continent or over the columns of the *Sunday Dispatch* without a chain, she is always "all there." Dad can write what are purported to be histories of past heroes (Charlie Peace, Crippen, etc.), but his daughter writes only of the present great ones. Dad in his time has defended many rich people, but only as individuals; but Lady Eleanor has taken upon herself the gargantuan task of defending the rich as a class—the whole boiling of 'em as it were! But let Lady Eleanor speak for herself.

In the *Sunday Dispatch* for November 4th, in her customary weekly contribution, "From my window in Vanity Fair," she throws down the gage of battle on behalf of the very rich. Attend now for the Overture!

October, if it has achieved nothing else, has at any rate been a red-letter month for the leisured poor.

I suppose that over this year's Cesarewitch and Cambridgeshire more money has been won in what the novelists call "Clubland" than at any time in the last 20 years.

Still, you must not run away with the idea that the proportion of Clubland which makes its living by betting and playing bridge for high stakes is a very considerable unit of the population.

Five per cent. of "Clubmen"? Possibly.

And they are the idle poor, not the idle rich. The more I think of that phrase, "the idle rich," the more I come to realise that the idle are not the rich and the rich are not the idle.

Only the relatively poor can afford to be idle; wealth carries with it far too many responsibilities.

Consider the so-called "gilded youth" of England.

\* First-class Brains.

You will find that the "bright young sparks," the "gay dogs-about-town," whatever you like to call them, who lead a strictly butterfly existence, are, almost without exception, penniless and, moreover, *always have been*—it is not a case of cause and effect.

I could mention to you at least two young Peers with a reputation for idleness who were born heir to the most impoverished titles in the country.

Well, you would hardly call them the idle rich, would you?

There now! It just shows you how prone we all are to mistake appearances for reality. In future we will know that Bond Street and Regent Street are kept going by the "idle poor." Those people who chase the sun round the world in sumptuous yachts are not the rich. The people who flock to Cowes, Goodwood, Ascot and Henley are merely the impoverished ones! The swagger golf clubs, the participants in the Quorn and Pychley Hunts for one-half of the year? pooh! mere Poor Law Institutions! The diners at the Ritz, Cecil or Berkeley?—they "haven't a bean!"

When next you hear that Lord Spondulicks is off to Cannes, Deauville, Egvpt, or going big game hunting in Central Africa, you will be able to size him up at once as one of the very poor, almost on the "dole"!

Who are the rich, then? Lady Eleanor can tell you!

When you come to the really rich young men it is a very different story.

I take three at random: Mr. Evan Morgan, whose father, Lord Tredegar, owns Newport, and must be one of the richest men in England; Lord Dumfries, son of Lord Bute, who is probably about the richest landowner in the country and owns a greater part of Cardiff Docks; and Sir Michael Duff-Assheton-Smith, who inherited over a million pounds on his 21st birthday the other day, and owns extensive slate quarries in Wales.

Not a bad kick-off, either? One is surprised, though, to find that he did not save this sum out of his school allowance! (You, reader, if you work hard enough, and "put by" one pound per week, will be possessed of a similar sum round about A.D. 21158!)

I am sure it would be a wonderful sight to see young Mike blasting his father's slates (though this would come easier to him if, like the writer, he lived under a leaky roof!). And to think of young Lord Dumfries "humping" 2-cwt. sacks of

sugar at his father's docks—isn't it too, too terrible?

But Lady Eleanor goes into more intimate and ghastly details of the hardships and toils of the really rich man's life:—

No one can say that landed youth shirks its responsibilities.

Take Lord Feversham.

Lord Feversham studied farming in South Africa first-hand, before taking over the management of his Yorkshire estates on his majority. On taking charge he promptly reduced the rents on the Duncombe estate by 15 per cent.

(Of course, nasty people, misled by those agitators, might say that old man Feversham must have been a bit of a Shylock, but we should speak well of the dead.)

You will rarely see Lord Feversham in London; he has far too much work to do in Yorkshire, where, in addition, he is president of the Yorkshire Junior Conservative organisations.

I should say that Lord Feversham, at the age of 22, was one of the most popular landlords in England.

How he must envy the care-free ploughman tripping lightly about his congenial duties from sunrise to sunset. What would he not give to change places with the miner, recumbent in soft repose (and one foot of cool water), hewing gaily at a more or less responsive coal seam! Oh, for the daily round and common task of the engine driver or fireman on an express passenger train!

With the approach of the season of goodwill and costivity we should remember these poor rich men toiling solely on our behalf—in Conservative Associations and elsewhere!

But, to continue:—

A lot of these rich young men are going in for politics.

Sir Michael Duff-Assheton-Smith, when he is not concerned with his Welsh estate, works all day long in an office where he learns the business of politics under the guidance of Commander Oliver Locker-Lampson.

How does he stand the strain? Two days' work in one is far too much for one of such tender years! One would think that learning the arduous details of conducting campaigns of "Clear out the Reds," or stampeding the electorate with the aid of "Red Letters," would be a full-time job for anyone, but it seems the rich are real whales for work! But there are other paragons of industry, it appears:—

Mr. Loel Guinness, Mr. Benjamin Guinness's son, went so far in the direction of hard work that he even spent his honeymoon learning business in Pittsburgh.

Now he is so busy nursing a constituency that he will be unable to visit his mother in her villa in Cannes this winter.

Stern duty first, and love a poor second! But what fearful news for all those ambitious youths who succumb to the allurements of the advertisements which promise them success in business and professional avocations! (You know the sort of thing I mean—"Let me be your father," "I planned this man's career!" "Increase your salary!" etc., etc.) When these young fellows learn that they will have to compete with prodigies of this type—such a Colossus of energy and genius—despair will animate their bosoms and thoughts of destruction enter their hearts. But, then, 'twas ever thus! The battle is to the strong, the race to the swift.

Now for the penultimate spasm:—

Then Mr. Evan Morgan.

Mr. Morgan contrives to fit into his life more strenuous and varied work than any young man I know.

He is in charge of Lord Tredegar's Limehouse estate, and has done an amazing amount of good in the district, where he is standing as Conservative candidate.

Mr. Morgan is only one of a group of young men of the so-called "leisured classes" who work like slaves in the East End in the cause not only of Conservatism but of improvement in social conditions generally.

Mr. William Teeling, in Silvertown, is another, Colonel John Dodge, in Mile End, a third.

It is hoped that the ungrateful wretches who have so much done for them by such hardworking kindly people with no thought of reward for themselves will see the error of their ways and will respond to their importunities to put them into Parliament, where they will be able to do even more "not only in the cause of Conservatism, but of improvement in social conditions generally." Truly they love the workers! Even that low fellow, Karl Marx, admits that when he says "The bourgeois is a bourgeois for the benefit of the working class!"

And now for the Grand Finale:—

So much for the leisured classes.

I can assure you that more work is done for nothing by the "leisured classes" of England than the average person would consent to do for a salary of several thousands a year.

It seems to me that there are very few people born with silver spoons in their mouths who do not apply them to the feeding of others besides themselves.

I am thinking also of those women, of some of whom you see photographs here, who devote their lives unremittingly to the organisation of various forms of entertainment in aid of charity.

Where our charities would be were it not for the "idle rich" I scarcely like to contemplate.

And the greatest of these is charity! One



would expect that their unremitting labours in the cause of charity would exact from their benevolent constitutions a heavy toll, but, wonderful to relate, they appear to look quite well on it. (Lady Balchett is without a wrinkle at 74!)

Of course, that wretched Tolstoy has said, "the rich will do anything for the poor, except get off their backs," but he was only an old cynic, who should have been ashamed to assail the motives of those who strive so disinterestedly to keep the poor content with their lot. If it were not for the charitable rich with their coal and blankets and soup kitchens, the poor might no longer support these benevolent ones in their devoted efforts to maintain the present glorious system of society, and might even put those horrid Socialists into power to deprive the rich of their hard-gotten wealth. And how thankful these rich people would feel if this were done! For if we had Socialism, these poor, toiling, rich wretches would have some surcease from their labours, and would be required to do merely the same amount of work as anybody else. Up to date, however, there has been no great rush on their part to join the Socialist Party, which is a matter for surprise, is it not?

"SARCASTIGATOR."

#### CLASS AT HEAD OFFICE.

It is proposed to conduct a class at Head Office on Friday evenings at 7.30, for the purpose of dealing with questions presenting difficulty to members. It is intended that the questions dealt with shall be primarily elementary ones of interest particularly to new members of the Party.

Will those who wish to attend please notify the General Secretary at 17, Mount Pleasant, W.C.1?

#### CAMBERWELL BRANCH.

### A LECTURE "MACHINERY AND ITS EFFECT UPON THE WORKING CLASS."

BY

Com. W. E. BROWN.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14th, at 8.30 p.m.  
Trades Council Room, 6a, Artichoke  
Place, Camberwell Green.

ADMISSION FREE. QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION.

### THE GREAT PRE-WAR PROSPERITY!

One of the inevitable drawbacks of broadcasting is that you cannot answer back. It is inevitable, or rather unavoidable, for the reason that heckling or questioning from an audience, possibly of millions, presents obvious difficulties. Of course, the absence of this possibility should make no difference to a lecturer with any conscience or honesty, but to politicians, and on certain occasions—such as the General Strike—this feature is a god-send. Here is a theme for a valuable digression on why broadcasting is a Government monopoly. But not to labour a separate point and to get to the matter in hand, I was listening to Miss Sackville-West the other evening lecturing on "Modern English Poetry." Very charming, very entertaining, but marred at the very outset by a slight inaccuracy. It is a pity when one sits down to be charmed, that one should get a half-brick in the ear for a start, but so it was. Miss Sackville-West asked us to commence what she called the Georgian period with 1900. She gave as her reasons for choosing that year as a starting point, "the South African War is over, the world is at peace, we are surrounded by the large air of material prosperity. . . . Now that is where one gets the nasty jar. I happen to have been alive, and taking keen notice of my surroundings in the year 1900.

"The large air of material prosperity." I like that! One remembers it so well. Only twenty-eight years ago, and it comes back like a beautiful dream. Speaking from memory, according to a tract issued about that time, the average wage of the working class was about 25s. per week, and one worker in every three died either in the workhouse, hospital, or lunatic asylum. The twelve-hour day was normal in scores of industries. And the unemployed! There is a touchstone for the large air of material prosperity. Who that is old enough does not remember the shabby processions of half-desperate men chanting their grubby war-cry, "We want work"? For how many years were not all efforts to get what was called a living wage fobbed off with the plea that "things were always like this after a war"? According to the official figures for December, 1902, before the Insurance Acts had made greater accuracy possible, there were half a million men out

of work. Among other disturbances, the Town Council of Croydon was stormed by the unemployed.

So that you see how a charming lecture on poetry can become the vehicle of a patent inaccuracy. Probably the hundreds of thousands of other listeners will have allowed the phrase to pass uninterruptedly in at one ear and out at the other, and little harm done, but it is worth retrieving from oblivion for several reasons. For one thing, it is interesting to note and dwell upon the fact that one has lived during a period to which the term "prosperity" is applied. Up till now, during my short lifetime, no one has ever discovered prosperity in the present tense. Years ago, or years ahead, yes! To-day, never! A case of jam yesterday, and jam to-morrow, but never jam to-day. At the moment, politicians call upon the unreflecting to consider the happy state of things "before the War," and propose, if you favour them with your votes, to lead you "back to prosperity." This happy phenomenon has the objectionable habit of disappearing as soon as you look at it. It is afflicted with a kind of polarity, which makes the people of England gaze longingly at the prosperity of America and the Colonies. And the colonists doubtless speak of the prosperity of the Old Country, whilst America is big enough to let the population on one side envy the prosperity they read about on the other.

There is a further reason why Miss Sackville-West's gem of polished piffle should not sink unhonoured and unnoted into the pool of forgotten things. It indicates a certain definite attitude of mind the working class in general, and the unemployed in particular, would do well to note. To that view, the problem of worklessness is nearly related to worthlessness, and is a problem quite minor and marginal. The unemployed exist as a sort of untidy fringe on the outside edge of the working class, and are best fobbed off with doles and forgotten. In a word, they are normal. That is the view, and it is a dangerous one. The *Daily News* (July 24th) has already told the world "there are 200,000 mine workers definitely and irrecoverably surplus to the industry." A writer in the *Evening Standard* of November 13th, A. A. B., speaking of present unemployment, made the following pregnant observations: "There were nearly a million unemployed in 1908, and the other two or three hundred thousand are

accounted for by the women imported into the labour market since the War, and the miners. Allowing for the increase of population and the surplus colliers, the aggregate amount of unemployment is normal."

There it is in a nut-shell. Unemployment, whether half a million in 1903, one million in 1908, or one and a half million in 1928, is normal, under Capitalism. In a few months' time you will have an opportunity of voting for the continuance of Capitalism. Some of those who will appear before you will call themselves Tories or Unionists, others Liberals, and others again Labour men. Rest assured, all, if elected, will carry on Capitalism, with colossal unemployment as its normal condition. If you do not desire to continue to live under Capitalism you have but one single, simple alternative. You must read our pamphlet on Socialism, the cheapest piece of literature in existence, 48 pages for twopence. If you agree with it, you must join with us in the only party that is aiming at the abolition of Capitalism and the substitution of Socialism. In politics there are but two parties, and two only. The Capitalist Party, with Tory, Liberal or Labour labels, and the Socialist Party, which needs no label. W. T. H.

### A SOCIAL.

Members and Friends are invited to a Social at

**THE MINERVA CAFE,**  
HIGH HOLBORN  
(Bury St. Corner),

Saturday, December 8th, 1928,  
at 7.30 p.m.

ADMISSION FREE.

### BATTERSEA.

**A LECTURE**  
AT  
**BATTERSEA TOWN HALL,**  
(LOWER HALL.)

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9th, at 7.30 p.m.

Subject:

"SOCIALISM AND TRADES UNIONISM."

Speaker - J. BELLINGHAM.

Admission Free. Questions and Discussion.



**OFFICIAL NOTICE.**

All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 17, Mount Pleasant, London, W.C.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

**TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTIONS.**

Twelve Months, post free... 2s. 6d.  
Six Months, post free... 1s. 3d.

**The Socialist Standard,**

DEC.



1928

**WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH OUR VOTES?**

With the approach of a General Election the "Left Wing" Labour groups are asking themselves how they ought to vote. All the rebels and near-rebels and would-be rebels are wondering whether they ought to carry their opposition to the Labour Party to the extent of telling their supporters to vote for Communist candidates or the candidates put up by branches expelled from the official Labour Party. They are, of course, in a difficult position. Having dubbed the Labour Party programme a "Liberal" programme, they must now choose either to support that programme and the candidates who fight on it, or, in effect, put themselves outside the Labour Party; for the Labour Party Executive is taking vigorous action wherever the dissident elements infringe the Party constitution and rules. Probably many of the Left-Wingers would like to take a definite stand, but they are deterred by the consequences. Whatever they may say about the discontent of the Labour Party membership with its leaders, a practical test soon convinces them that it is MacDonald not Maxton, J. H. Thomas not Arthur Cook, who have the support of the mass of the Trade Union members. A recent and illuminating test was the Borough Council elections.

In England and Wales the Communist candidates polled in the areas contested by them 10.5 per cent. of the Labour Party vote, and in Scotland 19.5 per cent. For the whole country their poll was 17.7 per cent. of the Labour votes in these selected constituencies (*Sunday Worker*, November 18th, 1928). The Editor of the *Sunday Worker* points out, too, that the Communist vote has declined since the Communist Party recently adopted the policy of openly opposing Labour candidates. He says that "in places where Communist candidates previously contested seats, before the adoption of the party's new electoral policy, decreased votes for the Communists are frequently recorded."

The *Sunday Worker* offers what is no doubt a correct explanation. Even many voters who are dissatisfied with the Labour Party programme will not vote against its candidates because they want to "get the Tories out." To indicate the unsoundness of this policy of voting for one capitalist party in order to prevent another capitalist party getting in, the *Sunday Worker* recalls the 1906 Election, when hundreds of thousands of workers who had no faith in Liberalism voted for the Liberals in order to keep the Tories out. The Liberals got in and eight years later led its dupes into the War.

Truly a fatuous policy, but who have done more to propagate it than the Communists and the multifarious "Left Wing" groups? The Communists from 1920 to 1927, and the other "Left Wing" groups still, have persistently denounced the Labour Party and simultaneously told the workers to vote for it because, in some way never explained and now (by the Communists) emphatically denied, it was supposed to be better than the other capitalist parties. If the workers still have faith in the Labour Party's programme of reforming capitalism, the responsibility cannot be shelved by the Communists and the *Sunday Worker*.

Even now, while opposing some Labour candidates, the Communist Party members are required to go on paying the political levy to the Labour Party through their Trade Unions. Could anything be more productive of confusion in the minds of the workers?

Mr. J. T. Murphy, a prominent member of the Communist Party, writes on this in the November issue of the *Communist*, and

(Continued on page 58.)



A section of the Capitalist Press of Australia hailed the news that the British Railway Workers had agreed to a reduction of Wages as a victory for the principle of harmonious relations between Capital and Labour.

F.A.T.: "No doubt you do feel a little more weak and hungry, but consider the impression you are making overseas."



points out the absurdity of asking the miners to contribute £10,000 a year to the Labour Party and then appealing to the miners again for more thousands to fight the Labour candidates. He also condemns the confusing relationship between the Communists and the Left Wing groups, which, he says, has made the Communist Party a "laughing-stock."

Our party members are not quite sure when they should be recruiting for the Left Wing and when for the party. It appears that we can carry the programme of the Left Wing in one pocket and that of the Communist party in the other, and, according to the audience we are addressing, use one or the other without contradiction, for . . . the Communist programme and the Left Wing are identical in all essentials. The only people who ought to be bewildered, apparently, should be the audience who are to be led into the Left Wing according to circumstances (i.e., whichever meeting they have attended—if a C.P. meeting, then into the C.P.; if a Left Wing meeting, then into the Left Wing). This may be considered by some of our comrades to be tactical, but I am sure that our party members are unhappy about it, and cannot get results whilst such a policy exists. (Communist, November, 1928.)

We see, therefore, that the Communists are still unprepared to accept and act on the recognition of the fact that the workers' economic position of subjection is the result of capitalism and will continue as long as capitalism continues, irrespective of whether the system is administered by Tories, Liberals, the Labour Party or by anyone else. Similarly, the *Sunday Worker*, having disposed of the fallacious argument that the workers should vote Labour to "keep the Tories out," proceeds to throw up another smoke screen in order to hide its retreat from the position to which its argument would logically lead it. The editorial lamely concludes:—

We shall give our votes only to the working-class candidates whose programme is the end of imperialism and the end of war.

Capitalism and the danger of capitalist war will not be brought to an end by voting for the Labour Party programme of reforms of capitalism. Labour candidates are compelled to fight on the Labour Party's general programme, but this, of course, will not prevent every single Labour candidate from saying that he is in favour of "ending Imperialism and war." Probably all the Liberals and most of the Tories will equally willingly subscribe to the same vague and unhelpful declaration. So that, having given good reasons why the workers should vote against the Labour candidates, the

*Sunday Worker* evades the issue with a piece of advice which is meaningless.

In contrast with the trifling of Communist and Left Wing groups, the Socialist Party gives a bold answer. If the workers vote for capitalism, then they will get what they vote for. Workers who want Socialism will vote only for Socialist candidates. The Socialist Party of Great Britain is unique among the political parties in this country in being prepared to put forward candidates fighting on that issue alone, Socialism or Capitalism. At present the number of workers who want Socialism is few in comparison with those who want Liberal capitalism, Tory capitalism or Labour Party capitalism. That unfortunate position can be remedied only by Socialist propaganda. It is not helped, but hindered, by voting for one in preference to another of the parties which stand for private or state capitalism. There are differences, and real differences, between the capitalist parties, but the differences do not touch the subject condition of the working class.

#### PARLIAMENTARY FUND.

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E. Stevens . . . . .	1	0	0
Camberwell Branch . . . . .	1	0	0
W. J. R. . . . .	0	10	0
Camberwell Branch . . . . .	2	0	0
Walthamstow Branch . . . . .	0	6	6
West Ham Branch . . . . .	0	13	10
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Total (31/10/28) £38 10 8

#### IS THERE A CAPITALIST SYSTEM?

"There is no such thing as the capitalist system!" exclaimed a public speaker in the hearing of the present writer recently. "A system (such as the solar system, for example) implies law—fixed, rigid, unalterable, tyrannic; but to-day you have infinite variation in exchange, with currency conditions in a state of chaos. No, there is certainly not a capitalist system."

This method of trying to combat Socialist propaganda is not original, and it is difficult to imagine any fairly well-informed opponent using it; but, knowing that the workers are seldom well-informed on matters outside their jobs, many champions of capitalism seem inclined to convey the impression that the Socialist is attacking a phantom of his imagination. In case any of our readers take them seriously, let us examine their case.

In the first place, it is not true that the solar system is "fixed and unalterable." It is in constant motion, radiating energy into space and thus altering its own composition. If astronomers are any guide, it had an origin and must have some end. Its lengthy existence (judged by human standards) does not alter the fact that it is a product of evolution.

Being composed of definite quantities of matter, its motions can be measured and expressed in the form of laws, and the same is true of other parts of the universe, including human society.

The prices of goods, for example (upon which we depend for our existence to-day), are regulated by economic forces, no matter what the variations in those prices may be. If a shopkeeper marks his goods too high, he is left with them on his hands; should he sell at too low a figure, he will not clear his expenses. In either case he will fail to realise a profit and will find himself on the way to the Bankruptcy Court. But what determines the figure at which he should sell?

The basic factor is the value of the goods, which is the expression of the amount of socially necessary labour embodied in them. Other factors are supply and demand. Sometimes the conditions will favour the seller and prices will tend to rise; at other times the reverse will obtain; but always there is the compelling force of competition, on one side or the other, or both simultaneously.

The effect of this force is felt most keenly by the workers. They have but one commodity to sell, that is, their power to labour. The value of this power, embodied in their brains, nerves, muscles, etc., depends upon the value of the necessary elements of their subsistence. The cost of the food, clothing, and shelter, etc., that the worker must have in order to go on working are reflected in the wages that they receive. In the long run and on the average, they cannot accept less without causing their energy to deteriorate and become unsaleable. They cannot get more, because there are machines on the one hand and unemployed workers on the other ready to take their places.

With the workers, the existence of economic law is not a matter of speculative theory; it is a painful, everyday experience. If there were no economic forces operating according to some discoverable law, nothing could prevent the workers claiming what wages they fancied, and the same would apply to the capitalists in fixing their prices. Nothing would be determined; all would be chaos; but human beings cannot exist on chaos and such a state is simply inconceivable.

At first sight, the realm of exchange presents an appearance of anarchy. The fluctuations of prices, including wages, are occasionally so violent that they seem capricious to the superficial observer.

In the same way, superstitious sailors, even today, attribute storms to spirits, etc., but for every wave there is a corresponding depression and the general level of the ocean remains unchanged. So with the world market. The rise in prices at one time encourages greater production till the market is glutted; then, with the consequent fall in prices, the less economically conducted concerns go out of business. Always there is going on a ruthless, blind, automatic selection of the fittest types of machinery and organisation for the production of the wealth, with the result that the social powers of production are greater to-day than ever before in human history.

How are these powers controlled? They are in private hands, in spite of their social character. Consequently, they are only set into operation for the production of private profit. There is no organised social plan. Competition asserts itself at every turn. Even the narrowing of the circle by the concentration of capital, the forming of



world trusts, international combines, etc., only makes the struggle fiercer.

The larger the output, the greater the importance of minute economies; yet the conflict in the market is as nought compared with that in the factory. If the capitalist is an anarchist in the realm of exchange, he is a despot in that of production, which is carried on amid the smouldering revolt of wage-slaves needing but little to fan it into open flame; but this revolt, again, is for the most part blind. It is only against the effects of the system, because the workers have not yet learnt to understand the cause, *i.e.*, the system itself.

Hence their efforts at improvement take the form of demands for higher wages and shorter hours, valuable enough if other things remained the same. Capitalism, however, constantly develops a greater power of exploitation. No programme of reforms can alter that. The workers cannot interrupt the development of industry; they can only take advantage of it by obtaining control of it through the common ownership of the productive forces themselves; but that would be Socialism—and "the end of all things." That at least is what those who pretend that "there is no capitalist system" would like us to believe. E. B.

## LECTURES

AT

FRIARS HALL, BLACKFRIARS  
ROAD, S.E.

ON

SUNDAY EVENINGS AT 7-30 p.m.

- Dec. 2. "Who are the Socialists." E. MACHAFFIE.  
Dec. 9. "Socialism and Labour." A. BARKER.  
Dec. 16. "Is Socialism Sound?" J. FITZGERALD.  
Dec. 23. "Socialism and the Modern Utopians." E. LAKE.  
Dec. 30. "Marxism to-day." A. KOHN.

Admission Free. Questions and Discussion.  
These Lectures are held under auspices of Clerkenwell Branch.

## GET TOGETHER!

Readers of the "Socialist Standard" who desire to be put into communication with other readers in their district are invited to notify the General Secretary, at 17 Mount Pleasant, W.C.1.

## CORRUPT AMERICA AND PURE ENGLAND.

In our October issue we left Mr. Baker gravely pointing out to a sullen House of Commons that there were many right honourable gentlemen, whose conceptions of what was right and honourable were inadequate. Doubtless the right hon. gentlemen will endeavour to put other conceptions of those qualities before Mr. Baker, before the Wireless and Cable Merger question goes off the stage. He went on to speak of some of the big people, as he called them, in the business. There was Sir Robert Kindersley, mentioned before, who was managing director of Lazard Bros., and also one of the directors of the Bank of England. His firm, Lazard Bros., were represented on the board of the Newcastle-on-Tyne Electric Supply Co. Lazard Bros. and S. Pearson & Sons, Ltd., were associated with the Whitehall Securities Corporation, Ltd., which holds half the share capital of Messrs. Pearson & Dorman & Long, Ltd., whose electric power interests in the Kent coalfield interlock with the County of London Electric Supply Co. S. Pearson & Sons completely controlled Whitehall Electric Investment, Ltd., along with the Power and Traction Finance Co., Ltd., in the Hungarian Trans-Danubian Electrical Co., Ltd. Messrs. S. Pearson & Sons are associated with Metropolitan Vickers Electrical Co., the G.E.P. of Berlin and Callenders Cable and Construction Co. Mr. Baker expressed himself as puzzled at the attitude of *The Times* newspaper, in view of his previous feeling that *The Times* at least is a national newspaper. And then he made the discovery that the Hon. R. H. Brand, one of the directors of *The Times*, was also a director of Lazard Bros. Another director is Sir Campbell Stuart, who is a member of the Imperial Wireless Conference, which is settling the whole thing. After briefly referring to the ramifications of Hambro's Bank, he next referred to Mr. Szarvasy. So far as is known, he was a mere shareholder in this country in 1910, but from 1912, became substitute director for Baron Springer, of Vienna. To-day he is managing director and chairman of the British, Foreign and Colonial Corporation, and a director of the Dunlop Rubber Co. When Lord Rothermere formed the *Daily Mail Trust*, it was through Mr. Szarvasy that the British Foreign and Colonial Cor-

poration issued a mortgage debenture for £9,000,000. Mr. Szarvasy is also a director of the Danube Navigation Co., the Guardian Assurance Co., and Martins Bank. With the late Alfred Lowenstein, and Albert Pam, of J. H. Schroeder & Co., he is on the directors' committee of the Hydro-Electric Securities Corporation of Quebec. This last belongs to the group of interests which control the power used by the Canadian Marconi Co., Ltd. Mr. Szarvasy is also chairman (and Lord Derby, president) of the Anglo-French Banking Corporation.

Proceeding with the big people, as Mr. Baker put it, there is Sir Charles Coupar Barrie, who is linked with Mr. Szarvasy on the directorate of the Danube Navigation Co. Sir Coupar Barrie is a member of the Post Office Advisory Council. There is Mr. F. R. S. Balfour, associated with Mr. Szarvasy on the Guardian Assurance Co., is also a member of the Bank of Montreal. Both these gentlemen have recently been added to the board of the Marconi Company. A third addition is Sir Frederick Sykes, who has been appointed Governor of Bombay. He was a director of the *Daily Mail Trust*, the Marconi Telegraph Co., the Underground Railways of London, the London Express Newspaper, Ltd., the *Sunday Sketch* and the *Sunday Herald*. And to-day he is Governor of Bombay. Of course as a Governor, he should give up his other jobs as director. But still, it is interesting, isn't it: yesterday a *Daily Mail* governor, to-day a Bombay Governor!

There are a few more columns of similar engaging facts, and it will be well worth the while of anyone interested to obtain a copy of *Hansard*, for Thursday, August 2nd. It should be carefully read over two or three times between now and the next General Election. Then, when you are passively listening to the fervid oratory of the sleek, oily, persuasive gentlemen who are anxious to serve their country once more, permit yourself to reflect on the vast and intricate network of interlocked capitalist interests, and to wonder just where the orator before you, fits in. At the moment, it may be useful to remember that the catchword for the next Election has not yet made its appearance. Doubtless behind closed doors, what they will call the plan of campaign is now being carefully sketched out, including possibly another "Red Letter," or some similar fooltrap. But this can safely be prophesied. Each of the capitalist parties

will assure you by all they hold sacred, that never in the whole history of the planet was there such a set of moral, virtuous, upright, self-sacrificing patriots as those now seeking your suffrages as so-and-so candidates. Likewise, never hitherto, has this burdened earth been required to support on its suffering breast such a vile, scurrilous, inept rabble as is comprised in the other party. You will be emphatically assured that between the one party and the other, there is fixed a great gulf, a yawning abyss.

But then, if you have read your *Hansard*, and your SOCIALIST STANDARD aright, you will perceive that interlocking directorates and international capital make light work of any gulf. You will see your Melchetts and your Derbys, your Szarvasys and Lowensteins, your French Bankers and German Barons, your Hungarian financiers and Canadian company promoters, all without distinction of race, religion, sex or creed, joined in one happy family whose name is PROFIT. It is for you to see behind the trickery of Elections, the pomp of ceremonial, the intoxication of oratory, to the reality beyond, capital exploiting labour. You will notice, if you listen to one of our speakers, that we do not divide our political opponents into good men and bad men, clever men and numbskulls, upright men and tricky men, rich men and poor men. No! We go deeper than that. We see society divided into two distinct classes, those on the one side who own our means of existence, and on the other, those who have to work for them and who are in consequence the slaves of the first. This system is an excellent one—for the Melchetts, the Derbys and the rest of them. One does not expect them to favour an alteration of it. Therefore, when they, or their friends, appear before you at Election time, a vote for them however obtained and however given, is a vote that society shall remain divided as at present, with a few very rich and a vast number poor. But the system is not an excellent one for you, and for me. It is necessary, therefore, that we band our greatly superior number together, and appoint our own representatives to Parliament who will not spend their time in delivering marvellous, flowery speeches, to sullen, bitterly hostile opponents, but who, when in a majority shall use the whole powers of Parliament to take our means of life from the hands of private profit-makers and convert them into socially owned tools



of production. As Mr. Baker's speech has revealed and as we have tried to make clear frequently in our columns, day after day, at amazing speed, capital is actively engaged in linking up the civilised world's life-units into closely knit monopolistic trusts. There is only one alternative, Socialism, and there is only one party fighting for it, the Socialist Party. Capital is moving, rapidly, ceaselessly, remorselessly. What are you doing?

W. T. H.

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## A LECTURE

IN THE ABOVE HALL ON

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## SOCIOLOGY OF EIGHTEENTH CENTURY FRENCH DRAMA.

By G. V. PLECHANOV.

PART II.

The choice of heroes from the ancient world was one of the numerous manifestations of the passion for the old, which itself was an ideological reflection of the struggle of the newly blossoming social state with feudalism. From the time of the Renaissance this love for the old civilisation passed over to the age of Louis XIV, which, as we know, has been compared to that of August. But when the *bourgeoisie* began to be imbued with an antithetical frame of mind, when in its heart "hatred together with a thirst for justice" began to grow, then the fascination of ancient heroes—fully shared by its educated representatives—appeared antedated, and the events of ancient history seemed to be insufficiently instructive. The hero of the bourgeois drama is "the man of the middle state," more or less idealised by the ideology of the *bourgeoisie*. This characteristic case, of course, could not harm the portrayal.

Let us go further. A true creator of the bourgeois drama in France was La Chaussée. Now what do we see in his many productions. An opposition to this or other sides of aristocratic psychology, a struggle with these or other prejudices—or, if you choose, vices—of the nobility. The contemporaries valued, above all, the moral preaching these productions embodied. And from this point of view the tearful comedy was true to its origin.

It is known that the ideologists of the French *bourgeoisie* who aimed to give its portrayal in their dramatic productions, did not display much originality. The bourgeois drama was not created by them, but was carried over to France from England. In England this kind of dramatic production sprang up at the end of the seventeenth century as a reaction against the awful looseness which then predominated on the stage, and which was a reflection of the moral fall of the English aristocracy. The *bourgeoisie*—struggling with the aristocracy—wanted the comedy to become "worthy of the Christians," and began to preach in it the *mores* of its class. The French literary innovators of the eighteenth century, borrowing extensively from English literature everything which corresponded to the conditions and

feelings of the French *bourgeoisie*, carried to France this characteristic of the English tearful comedy. The French bourgeois drama, no less than the English, preaches the virtues of the bourgeois family. This is one of the secrets of its success. At first glance, it seems entirely inconceivable that the French bourgeois drama, which, around the middle of the eighteenth century, appeared to be an established literary production, fell to the background even before the classic tragedy, which, from all logic, should have receded before the bourgeois tragedy.

We shall shortly see how this strange circumstance is explained, but, before, let us say this:

Diderot, who, thanks to his passionate desire for innovation, could not but be attracted to the bourgeois drama, and who, as we know, participated in the new literary field (recall his *Le fils naturel* in 1757, and his *La pere de famille* in 1758) demanded that the stage give a representation, not of a character, but of a condition—particularly a social condition. He was replied to in the following manner: Social conditions do not define a person. "What is," he was asked, "a judge in himself (*le juren soi*)? What is a merchant in himself (*le negociant en soi*)?" But here was a wide misunderstanding. Diderot talked not about the merchant *en soi*, but about the merchant of that time, and especially about the judge of that period. And that judges gave much of instructive material for very realistic scenic representation is best seen in the famous comedy, *Le mariage de Figaro*. Diderot's demand was only a literary reflection of the revolutionary aims of the French "middle state" of that era.

(To be continued.)

## S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS

LONDON DISTRICT.	
<b>Sundays</b>	Clapham Common, 3 p.m. Tottenham, West Green Corner, 11.30 a.m. Tooting, Garrett Lane, Tooting Broadway, 7.30 p.m. Victoria Park, 4 p.m. Woolwich, Beresford Square, 7.30 p.m. Hyde Park, 11.30 p.m.
<b>Mondays</b>	Paddington, Prince of Wales, 8 p.m. Paddington, Prince of Wales, 8 p.m. Clerkenwell, Gurnault Place, 8 p.m.
<b>Wednesdays</b>	Hackney, Paragon Road and Mare Street, 8 p.m. Paddington, Prince of Wales, 8 p.m.
<b>Thursdays</b>	Becontree, Rodney Street, Ilford, 8 p.m.
<b>Fridays</b>	Clerkenwell, Acton St., Grays Inn Rd., 8 p.m.
<b>Saturdays</b>	West Ham, Water Lane, 8 p.m. Wood Green, Jolly Butchers Hill, 8 p.m. Leyton, Corner Grange Park, 7.30 p.m.
HANLEY BRANCH.	
<b>Sundays</b>	Hanley Market Square, 7 p.m. Burslem, St. John Square, 7 p.m.



## BRANCH DIRECTORY.

- BATTERSEA.**—Sec., 2, Hanbury-road, S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8.30 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns-road. Discussion second Thurs. in month.
- BECONTREE.**—Sec., Hy. Gratton, 4, Drummond Ave., Brooklands, Romford. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 7.30, at above address.
- BIRMINGHAM.**—Sec. E. Jesper, 38, Rollason-rd., Erdington. Branch meets The Continental Café, Moor St., 1st and 3rd Sundays at 11 a.m.
- CAMBERWELL.**—Branch meets at Camberwell Trades Council Room, 6A, Artichoke Place, Camberwell Green, every Friday at 8.30 p.m. Discussions—public invited. Letters to Secretary at above address.
- CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.
- CLERKENWELL.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at 17, Mount Pleasant, W.C.1. Discussions first Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.—all invited. Sec., at above address.
- EAST LONDON.**—Sec., D. Jacobs, 28, Lyal Road, Bow, E.3.
- GLASGOW.**—Sec. W. Falconer, 128, Bluevale Street. Branch meets every Thursday, 7.30 p.m., Unitarian Church Hall, Ross Street, Glasgow. Public invited. Discussions.
- HACKNEY.**—Branch meets The Old Gravel Pit Hall, Mare-street, Hackney, Mondays, 8 p.m., Discussions 9.30. Communication to Sec. as above.
- HANLEY.**—Branch meets Tuesdays, Working Men's Club, Glass-st. Sec., F. Goldstraw, 38, Paddock Street, Hanley.
- ISLINGTON.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 144, Seven Sister-rd., Holloway, N. Sec., M. Baker, 18, Orpingley-rd., N.7.
- LEYTON.**—Sec., A. Holland, 396, Lea Bridge-rd., Leyton. Branch meets 8 p.m., Trades and Labour Hall, Grove House, High-rd., every Monday. Public invited.
- MANCHESTER.**—Sec., W. Addison, 111, West Park-street, Salford, Manchester.—Branch meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month, 7.45 p.m., at 114, Duke St., Stretford-road.
- PADDINGTON.**—Branch meeting held on 2nd and 4th Fridays, 8 p.m., in room above the Co-operative Stores, 306, Kilburn-lane, W.9 (side door).
- SOUTHERD-ON-SEA.**—Sec., J. Bird, 5 Wellington-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.
- TOOTING.**—Sec., 15, University-road, Collier's Wood, S.W. 19. Branch meets every Friday at 8 p.m. at Tooting Adult School, 971, Garratt-lane, S.W. 17.
- TOTTENHAM.**—Secretary, 18, Woodlands Park Rd., N.15. Branch meets Fridays, Room 2, Trades Hall, 7, Bruce Grove. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.
- WALTHAMSTOW.**—Sec., S. E. Williams, 3, Dyson-rd., Leytonstone, E.11. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.
- WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107 Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at Secretary's address.

- WEST HAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford rd., Stratford. Sec., P. Hallard, 22, Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.
- WOOD GREEN.**—All communications to Sec., F. W. Godfrey, 71, Falkland Road, N.8.
- WOOLWICH.**—Branch meets at 94, Griffin Road, Plumstead. Communications to Secretary at above address.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

**OBJECT.**—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interests of the whole community.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain

**HOLDS—** That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.